



Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum **Annual Meeting**

Current Board Members

Melissa Fouse, President

Melissa Fouse is an arts advisor and appraiser specializing in Alaska Native Arts. She has owned her own business for nearly twenty years. She is skilled in community and government relations, fundraising, board development, strategic planning, conference, planning, executive management, and budgeting due to years in staffing roles in the Alaska Legislature and around Anchorage. She holds a BA in Philosophy/Applied Ethics and a Master of Philosophy. Melissa has served on the Friends Board since 2022 and as president of the Friends since 2023.

Roby Littlefield, Secretary

Roby Littlefield joined the Friends board of directors in 2022 and immediately became the secretary. She was re-elected by membership to her second term in 2024. Roby is a Tlingit language teacher and culture bearer for both the University of Alaska Southeast and Sitka School District. She also volunteers on the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission.

Fredrick Olsen Jr, Treasurer

Fred Olsen Jr was elected to the Friends of SJM in 2019 and re-elected in 2022. He also serves on the STA tribal council and Kayaaní Commission. He is the son of a SJ High School graduate (Fred Sr, 1956). Fred lives in Sitka and works in development at the local radio station where he also hosts the radio show "Gunalcheesh", a weekly one hour celebration of Alaska Native languages on FM station KCAW Sitka. Originally from Kasaan, Fred is Haida, Eagle moiety, Sgajuuga.ahl clan.

Christopher Berk

Christopher Berk is a cultural anthropologist who works at Auburn University in Alabama. He has conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Tasmania, Australia since 2004. He has worked with Tasmanian Aboriginal groups in processes of cultural revitalization and material culture. In 2019 he was a faculty fellow during the Smithsonian's Summer Institute in Museum Anthropology (SIMA) at the National Museum of Natural History. He first brought students to Sitka as part of an anthropology field course in 2023. He looks forward to leading his third class in Sitka this August and hopes to return with students every year/every other year. He joined the Board of Directors for the Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum in September 2023.

Justin "Kaa Shaayí" Ketah

Justin "Kaa Shaayí" Ketah graduated with highest honors from Northwest Indian College in 2024, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Native Studies Leadership with emphasis on Northwest Coast Design. His academic studies complement his growing understanding of Tlingit Formline design, the traditional visual design language of his ancestors. Originally from Ketchikan, Alaska, Justin is committed to cultural preservation through education and nonprofit service. He actively contributes to several organizations as a board member, including the Friends of the Sheldon Jackson Museum and Cedar Spirit Foundation. Justin's research experiences as a two-time recipient of grants from the Bill Holm Center at the Burke Museum have deepened his appreciation for the exceptional artistry found in traditional Tlingit works. Through his board service, Justin works to support cultural institutions that preserve and honor the rich artistic traditions of Southeast Alaska and its accomplished Indigenous artists.

Demaris Hudson

Demaris Hudson is Dena'ina Athabascan, a Tribal Enrolled Member of The Native Village of Tyonek. She has been a director on many boards throughout 20 plus years serving Alaska Native non profits in education for Alaska Native students in Anchorage and 2nd education. She is a graduate of the Indigenous Set Up - an Anchorage Community Land Trust partnership with Cook Inlet Tribal Council. She joined Friends of SJM in 2022. She is a Cultural Bearer of her Dena'ina Athabascan heritage with a wealth of knowledge and perceptive on Alaska native art and culture.

Steve "Íxt'ík Éesh" Johnson

Steve Íxt'ík Éesh Johnson is a Tlingit fisherman who grew up learning how to catch and preserve wild foods in Southeast Alaska. Steve is a culture bearer and brings tribal values into everything he does. He was appointed to the Friends of SJM Board of directors in March 2025. He also serves on the STA tribal council. Steve's grandfather was AP Johnson (Tlantech) Ixt'lk'Eesh the valedictorian of the first graduating class of SJ who later made many of the hunting and fishing implements in the museum collection.

Rosemary Carlton, emeritus

Rosemary is the retired Curator of Collections at the Sheldon Jackson Museum. She worked as Interpretive Specialist at the Museum from 1985 until 2002 when she became Curator. She retired in 2010. Rosemary has served two terms on the State Historical Society and two terms on Museums Alaska state boards. After retiring she has volunteered for the Sitka Historical Society; Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum. She served on the Friends Board from 2014 to 2022 and was president of the Friends from 2017-2022. She currently is an emeritus board member.