

Creating a Board Portal for the Oneida County History Center

Background



Since 1876, the Oneida County History Center has been dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of the region. Located in Utica, New York, the OCHC hosts exhibits, a research library, and a variety of weekly programs.

This summer, I worked with the OCHC in a variety of capacities. Besides creating a board portal, I updated their online bookstore. I added descriptions and cataloged books that required more information. I also researched and recommended titles to be added to the bookstore, including local history books and books by local authors. Finally, I also learned a lot about local history through writing an article on how the Spanish Flu of 1918 impacted Utica as well as editing and compiling biographies for Living Legends and Hall of Fame nominees.

Board Portal

What is a board portal?

A board portal is a secure platform for nonprofit boards to coordinate schedules, upload organizational documents, record meetings, and more.

What was the process of creating a board portal for the Oneida County History Center?

Initially, I sat down with the Director for Education and Outreach and the Interim Executive Director. Together, we identified the needs and requirements of the organization; they needed a platform that was secure, easy to use, and within budget. I researched platforms that met these requirements and we ultimately decided to use Google Sites through G-Suite for Nonprofits. Next, we developed a system of organizing their documents into categories. Finally, I created a tutorial for uploading documents and maintaining the system to ensure ease of access.

Response to COVID-19

Because of the pandemic, I worked remotely from my home in Canada. From March to June, the OCHC hosted online events, including virtual lectures, and the staff worked remotely. The Center itself began preparing for reopening in June when a few staff members were able to return to the office. They developed cleaning protocols, curbside-pickup for bookstore purchases, and procedures for volunteers and visitors. Both directors said that this experience has been extremely exciting and challenging. The directors were happy to welcome back their regular volunteers and fully reopen on July 13th.



Kerr, Doug. "Oneida County Historical Society, at Utica, New York, United States." Flickr, 19 Sept. 2009, www.flickr.com/photos/7327243@N05/4021390545/.