



Norman B. Leventhal
Map Center
at the Boston Public Library

Position Description

Reference & Geospatial Librarian

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Title: Reference & Geospatial Librarian

Organization: The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library

Reports to: Curator of Maps

Location: Boston, Massachusetts

Websites: leventhalmap.org; collections.leventhalmap.org

THE OPPORTUNITY

Building upon the legacy of Norman B. Leventhal’s vision and leadership, the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library seeks a Reference & Geospatial Librarian to help deliver on the mission of the Leventhal Map Center to spark curiosity and learning among people of all ages.

Stewarding the Boston Public Library’s cartographic collection of more than 200,000 maps and 5,000 atlases, the Leventhal Map Center is ranked among the top map centers in the United States for the size of its collection and the significance of its historic (pre-1900) material; its track record of outstanding public exhibitions; innovative K-12 education programs for students and teachers that enhance the teaching of subjects from geography to history to language arts to STEM; and advanced digitization program and website offering access to the digital collections, tools, and other resources.

The collection is the second largest in the country located in a public library, and the Leventhal Map Center’s mission encompasses providing broad and free access to and meaningful engagement with these invaluable resources for scholars, educators, students, and the general public.

The collection is primarily from the United States, World, and Europe, and dates from 1482 to the present. It features four “Collections of Distinction”:

The American Revolutionary War period (defined broadly as 1750 to 1800, these maps highlight Boston's role in the revolution but also document the crucial events that led from the French and Indian War to the War for Independence to the formation of a new nation during the last decade of the 18th century).

Boston and New England (depicting the physical and cultural geography of the New England region, these maps, bird's eye views, and atlases provide moderate scale coverage of the entire region as well as large scale coverage of Boston and individual towns and counties throughout Massachusetts and the neighboring states).

Maritime Charts and Atlases (dating from the 17th century through the 19th century, these charts and nautical atlases pertaining to the North Atlantic, and the coastal waters of Europe

and the United States produced by commercial firms and government provide resources for tracing the routes of early explorers, reconstructing the maritime history of New England, and studying the history of publishing navigational aids).

Urban Maps (focusing on Boston and neighboring cities and towns, urban maps and atlases provide a global context for studying the history of urban mapping , as well as accessing urban growth, city planning and environmental issues from the late 16th century to the present).

The Leventhal Map Center's last major exhibition, *We Are One: Mapping America's Road from Revolution to Independence* featured 60 maps, 40 prints, paintings, and objects selected from 20 partner institutions, including the British Library, the Library of Congress, and private collectors. It attracted 107,000 visitors at the Boston Public Library, and another 120,000 at Colonial Williamsburg. It will open at the New-York Historical Society in November 2017. The semiannual changing exhibitions in the Leventhal Map Center's own gallery attract approximately 60,000 visitors each.

With a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Leventhal Map Center has developed partnerships with nine institutions including the British Library, Library of Congress, and private collectors to offer on Leventhal Map Center's website 2,200 high resolution digitized maps of the American Revolutionary War era.

In collaboration with the Boston Public Library Web Services Group, the LMC recently (February 2017) launched a [new web maps portal](#), that incorporates web map services and a public-facing georeferencing tool. The new portal presents many interesting new opportunities to share and use maps in web applications, educational materials, and digital humanities applications.

Educational programs for students in grades K to 12 are offered to school groups at the Leventhal Map Center and in the classroom. An extensive section of the website offers tools for teachers to create map sets for use in their classrooms as well as lesson plans based on Common Core standards. Professional development programs for teachers are scheduled regularly throughout the year, and the Carolyn A. Lynch Teacher Fellowships provide the opportunity for two teachers annually to perform research in the in the collection, develop their skills teaching with maps, and create curricular materials for their own use and for the Leventhal Map Center to share with other educators.

Since its founding in 2004, the Leventhal Map Center has grown significantly and secured major funding from institutions and individuals. In support of its work in conservation, exhibitions and education, the Leventhal Map Center has been the recipient of \$1.1 million in grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum and Library Services; and over \$800,000 in grants from private foundations. The most recent gala raised nearly \$1.5 million from corporations, foundations, and individuals. The Leventhal Map Center's operating budget is approximately \$1.5 million, partially supported by an endowment of approximately \$8 million. These successful activities and grants reflect the Leventhal Map Center's ability to marshal resources to make an impact.

For more information on the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library, see Appendix A. For more information on the Boston Public Library, see Appendix B.

ROLE

Reporting to the Curator of Maps, the Reference & Geospatial Librarian takes the lead in developing and overseeing the Leventhal Map Center's digital and geospatial initiatives, provides cartographic and geographic reference services, and assists with collection management. To that effect, he or she:

Digital and Geospatial Technologies

1. Leads in developing and applying digital, geospatial and related technologies to exhibitions, reference services, and the cartographic collections of the Leventhal Map Center and Mapping Boston Foundation.
2. Trains co-op students and volunteers in georeferencing maps for use on the web, uses GIS technologies to prepare custom-designed maps for exhibitions and other educational programs, manages interactive touch screen projects.
3. Serves as Map Center lead for the digital collections website, working in tandem with the Boston Public Library web and IT services staff.
4. Provides staff initiative and support for the Board of Review IT subcommittee.

Reference and Research

1. Provides both historic and current cartographic and geographic reference and research assistance to library patrons, using a wide variety of print and electronic resources.
2. Develops and designs online Libguides.
3. Oversees or performs the pulling and refiling of maps and atlases for Library patrons.
4. Monitors Rare Maps Reading Room patrons while they are examining materials.
5. "Collects and compiles Leventhal Map Center's reference and other use statistics including circulation and web analytics."
6. Represents the Leventhal Map Center in public outreach and educational programs.
7. Performs other duties as required.

Collections Management

1. Oversees conservation and collection management projects under Curator's supervision. Compiles lists of materials that are being sent to outside conservators and Boston Public Library Digital Lab; makes general assessment of conservation needs according to pre-defined categories; and arranges for the transportation of these materials to the digital lab or outside conservators. Develops and oversees relocation, relabeling and inventory projects to be performed by Gallery Attendants and interns.
2. Advises Curator concerning potential acquisitions.

Intellectual Capital

1. Serves as internal expert specialist and provides advice to staff and library administration in the field of digital and geospatial map technologies.
2. Maintains professional contacts in the field and keeps up-to-date with the field.

External

3. Represents the Leventhal Map Center in the history, geography, geospatial, cartography, museums, and related fields through publishing papers, giving presentations, and attending conferences. Cooperates with scholars and institutions to maximize use and expand the appreciation of Leventhal Map Center resources in the greater community.
4. Helps create opportunities to educate the public about maps, including initiating and implementing activities which enhance the appreciation and understanding of maps both within and outside the library and on the Leventhal Map Center website <http://www.leventhalmap.org/> including exhibitions, public programs, educational activities, publications, lectures and other collaborative and cooperative programs.
5. Coordinates and collaborates with the Leventhal Map Center Director of Education in the creation of K-12 and higher education learning opportunities for students and teachers. Creates public programming for the Boston Public Library community. In this past this has included Carto and digital collections workshops.
6. Coordinates and collaborates with the institutional advancement efforts of the Leventhal Map Center including engaging with prospective donors and funders and finding opportunities to match their giving interests and priorities with the Leventhal Map Center's work.

Internal

7. Serves as a member of the curatorial team consisting of: Curator of Maps, Assistant Curator, Reference & Geospatial Librarian, and Senior Cataloger.
8. Assumes responsibility for training Leventhal Map Center staff in the specialized digital and other technologies of the field.
9. Works with the Board of Review IT Subcommittee, a group of academics, curators, collectors, and other cartographic experts from the field who advise the Leventhal Map Center.
10. Liaises with the Boston Public Library's Reference staff.
11. Performs other related duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

- **Education:** Bachelor's degree required. Major in history or geography preferred. Master's degree in Library Science preferred.
- **Education or equivalent experience:** Digital and geospatial technologies, including experience with digitized maps, georeferencing, cartographic software, and knowledge of digital humanities.
- **Experience:**
 - Reference experience required.
 - Experience using online bibliographic data bases, such as WorldCat, JSTOR, OAlster, etc.
 - Familiarity with searching for cartographic items using a variety of digital map collections, such as Library of Congress, Old Maps Online, and David Rumsey Map Collection, OpenGeoPortal.
 - Training and experience in using georeferencing and Geographic Information System software.
 - Proficiency working with digital imagery in programs such as Adobe Photoshop.
 - Proficiency with Microsoft Office Programs (Word, Access, Power Point, Excel).
- **Additional Requirements:** Will often work with old maps and atlases that are dirty, fragile and in need of conservation treatment. Will need to be physically capable of lifting 25 lb. objects over head, handling full oversize (36" x 48") folders, and pushing 40 lb book cart.
- **Additional Information:** Successful applicant will be able to recognize various map types (topographic maps, coastal charts, town plans, bird's eye views, county landownership maps), cartographic publishing styles (woodcut, engraving, lithograph), and bibliographic elements (such as cartographer, engraver, publisher).

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES

- Working knowledge of local (Boston and Massachusetts), United States and world history and geography; excellent map reading skills.
- Willingness to use and foster a variety of approaches to create enthusiasm and support for maps in widely varying constituencies.
- Interested in modern library technical services from digitization, repositories, cataloging and web services with a geospatial twist.
- Familiar with new uses of georeferenced materials in federated collections and digital humanities applications.
- Initiative in generating new ideas and proven ability to improve existing work flows, techniques and procedures.
- Effective communicator with the ability to work well and foster productive relationships with public of all age groups, library community, map community and partners.
- Ability to interpret and execute Boston Public Library policy, understanding and interest in the development of Library resources and services, including the ability to help define the role of the Leventhal Map Center within the Boston Public Library.
- Superior communication skills including oral and written presentation skills.
- Ability to work with various world languages (such as Latin, French, Spanish, or German) represented in the collections.
- High degree of personal integrity, professional demeanor, tact, good judgment, dependability, and a commitment to values that support the Leventhal Map Center's mission to foster initiative, integrity and excellence in an environment of collaboration, collegiality, civility, and responsible stewardship.

TO APPLY

We welcome qualified candidates from a wide variety of backgrounds including history, geography, historical cartography, geospatial technologies, and digital humanities to apply for the position.

The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer. City of Boston residency is not required.

Please submit cover letter and resume by email. Please begin subject line with Last name, First name, Reference and Geospatial Librarian.

Connie Chin
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Appendix A

Organizational History and Overview

The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library was created in 2004 as a division of the Boston Public Library (BPL) in a public-private agreement between the BPL and the map collector-philanthropist Norman B. Leventhal.

In 2007, the Leventhal Map Center became a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization governed by an independent Board of Directors, in a long term partnership with the Boston Public Library.

Focused on promoting the use of maps as an important educational tool to understand history, civilization and the world today, the Leventhal Map Center seeks to preserve, catalog, study, and exhibit an historically significant collection of over 200,000 (World, European and United States) maps and 5,000 atlases in the collection of the BPL and Mapping Boston Foundation. The Leventhal Map Center is located on the first floor of the Library's historic McKim Building in Copley Square. It includes an exhibition gallery that features changing thematic exhibitions, a public learning center with current atlases and reference books, and a room for the research of rare maps and atlases. The Leventhal Map Center is dedicated to the creative educational use of its cartographic holdings, which extend from the 15th century to the present. In pursuit of its mission, the Center collects and preserves maps and atlases, promotes research of the collection, and makes its resources available to the public through its website, exhibitions, publications, lectures, and other programs. The Center has a particular interest in developing innovative uses of maps and geographic materials to engage young people's curiosity about the world, thereby enhancing their understanding of geography, history, world cultures, and citizenship. The Leventhal Map Center's mission is governed by the mandate to provide free access to all. Programs of the Leventhal Map Center include education programs in and out of the classroom, outreach to schools and branch libraries throughout Boston, teacher development programs, publications and exhibits, lectures, and an interactive web site.

Appendix B

The Boston Public Library founded in 1848, by an act of the Great and General Court of Massachusetts, the Boston Public Library (BPL) was the first large free municipal library in the United States. The BPL's first building opened in 1854 with a collection of approximately 16,000 volumes. The present Copley Square location has been home to the BPL since 1895, when architect Charles Follen McKim completed his "palace for the people." In the latter half of the 19th century, the BPL worked vigorously to develop and expand its branch library system. Viewed as a means to extend its presence through the city, the first branch library in the United States was opened in East Boston in 1870. Between 1872 and 1900, 21 more Branches began servicing communities through Boston's diverse neighborhoods. In 1972, the BPL expanded its Copley Square location with the opening of an addition designed by Philip Johnson. Today, the McKim building houses the BPL's vast research collection and the Johnson building holds the circulating collection of the general library and serves as headquarters for BPL's 24 branch libraries. In addition to 6.1 million books in the general Library, the BPL holds over 1.2 million rare books and manuscripts, a wealth of maps, musical scores and prints. Among its large collection, the BPL holds several first edition folios by William Shakespeare, original music scores from Mozart to Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf," a map that pre-dates Columbus's 1492 voyage to the new world and, in its rare book collection, the personal library of John Adams. Over 2.2 million patrons visit the BPL and its branches each year.