

Megan (Laitala) Melinat



I was honored to receive a Villagers scholarship to the Preservation Institute: Nantucket program in 1999! At the time, I had just completed my first year in the Master of Architecture program at the University of Florida and was eager for the hands-on experience the program provided -- and in such a magical place. It proved to be a highly influential portion of my academic career and then my professional one.

Following graduation I worked for a private architectural firm specializing in historic preservation; worked in state government as the designer for the Michigan Main Street program; and after another stint in the private sector working with a firm focused on new urbanism, I returned to civil service at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (Virginia's state historic preservation office) where I am now the Director of the Preservation Incentives Division, responsible for managing the state's robust historic easement and historic rehabilitation tax credit programs. The preservation fundamentals I learned and applied during Preservation Institute: Nantucket program, and the experience interacting with community members from a wide variety of backgrounds are aspects of my education that I rely on daily. I'm so grateful for the scholarship I received from The Villagers, as it facilitated my full participation in the program.