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LGBTQ+ Communities in Wheeling, West Virginia **CONTEXT NOTES**

In 2020, Rosemary was elected to the Wheeling City Council and became the first openly transgender person elected official in the state of West Virginia. When I first started this project to document LGBTQ+ communities and visibility in Wheeling, West Virginia, I knew Rosemary could offer a unique perspective both as a community organizer and an elected official.

I lived and worked in Wheeling for a year (Aug. 2020 to Aug. 2021) as an AmeriCorps service member at Wheeling Heritage, a local nonprofit. I arrived a few months after Rosemary's election and got to witness the beginning of her political career. Several of my colleagues at Wheeling Heritage were friends with Rosemary, but I did not personally interact with her very much during my time in Wheeling. I used those contacts and relationships to contact Rosemary via email to gauge if she would be interested in participating in my project.

Before interviewing, we corresponded through email numerous times to set up expectations and arrange interview details. While I did not provide Rosemary with specific questions, I did list potential topics that I wanted to talk about. I specified, both over email and before starting the recording, that she should not answer any questions that she did not want to or feel comfortable answering. Since the interview was virtual, there was no non-verbal communication off-camera. After the recording, we had limited email exchange--Rosemary sent me her signed release form and I provided the interview transcript for her review.

While I no longer live in Wheeling, I spent a year working with communities in the city and broader Ohio Valley to record and share their histories. I have relationships and have built trust as a public history professional in the city.