Dear Martha's Vineyard Bank Community Choice Grant Committee,

On behalf of the Vineyard Preservation Trust, we are honored to nominate Sissy Biggers of the Vineyard Preservation Trust and The Carnegie Heritage Center as our team member who has made a meaningful difference in our community and strengthened the Trust's mission and impact.

On any given summer morning in Edgartown, you might notice a small crowd forming outside the Carnegie Heritage Center. Some are year-round Islanders. Others are visitors who've been told, "You have to take this tour."

Then Sissy Biggers begins to speak—and history feels less like a lesson and more like a conversation. This is the kind of leadership she has brought to the Vineyard Preservation Trust.

As Special Projects and Community Engagement Consultant, Sissy provides senior leadership for special programs, educational initiatives, and community engagement at The Carnegie and across VPT's portfolio of historic properties. But what she truly leads is connection—between past and present, between buildings and people, between preservation and purpose.

When she joined the Trust, VPT already had a strong reputation for stewardship. What Sissy added was narrative force. She understood instinctively that preserving landmarks is only half the job. The other half is telling the stories inside them in ways that make people care.

One of her most visible and transformative contributions has been the creation of VPT's standalone historic walking tour program—now widely regarded as the best on Martha's Vineyard. The tours are meticulously researched, but never dry. Sissy blends scholarship with warmth, weaving together maritime history, civic milestones, and lesser-known Island stories in ways that feel immediate and relevant. Islanders rediscover streets they thought they knew. Visitors gain a deeper appreciation for the place they're exploring. Conversations continue long after the tour ends. Many participants become members. Some become donors. Nearly all leave with a clearer understanding of why preservation matters.

Through her work, VPT is not simply maintaining buildings—it is activating them, creating opportunities for dialogue, reflection, and shared experience. In doing so, Sissy has strengthened the Trust's role as a cultural convener on the Island.

Sissy's impact on the Vineyard Preservation Trust is rooted in her extraordinary ability to communicate and connect. A seasoned writer with a deep love for Martha's Vineyard, she translates complex history into stories that feel clear, human, and alive—strengthening the Trust's expression of its mission and why it matters. At the same time, she is a natural convener.

Sissy brings together educators, artists, business owners, and nonprofit leaders with ease, transforming collaboration into meaningful relationship- building. When new ideas emerge, she doesn't wait for perfect conditions—she rolls up her sleeves and moves them forward, turning vision into action.

Sissy's vibrant, infectious positivity has become a catalyst for growth at the Vineyard Preservation Trust. She raises the bar internally—driving greater clarity, creativity, and excellence—while expanding the Trust's reach across the Island. The results are tangible: attendance has grown, partnerships have deepened, and engagement has shifted from passive to participatory.

Most importantly, she brings the mission to life—demonstrating that preservation is not about freezing history in time, but carrying it forward with intention. When history feels personal and preservation feels purposeful, the mission doesn't simply endure—it resonates.