



June 2025

Make a Donation!

Celebrating Pride Month



As the seat of federal power, it is no surprise that Washington, DC, has been a major focal point in the fight for LGBTQ rights and resistance. From protests to lift the ban on gay and lesbian federal workers to those legalizing same-sex marriage, DC has a strong history of activism and community.

In celebration of Pride Month and DC's hosting of WorldPride 2025, the DC Preservation League and DC Office of Planning partnered with the [Rainbow History Project](#) on two walking tours of LGBTQ historic sites in the Dupont Circle Historic District. The DC Preservation League also hosted a booth at the Street Festival on Pennsylvania Avenue NW, where over 300 attendees stopped by to chat with staff and 100 attendees signed up for the newsletter!

To continue the celebration, click below for a digital LGBTQ history tour that you can take from home. This tour is a collection of sites located in the District that have been historically significant to the city's LGBTQ community. Not every site is a designated landmark, yet each location is historically significant. For additional information on DC's LGBTQ historic sites, check out the historic context statement completed in 2019.

DC's LGBTQ History Tour

LGBTQ Historic Context Statement

The History of the Latino Community of Washington, DC  
1943 - 1991

Historic Context Study



The *Unity Mural*, located at 2119 Champlain Street NW, was completed in 1982 through the efforts of El Centro de Arte and the Latin American Youth Center. Photo courtesy of the DC Preservation League.

The History of the Latino Community of Washington, DC, 1943 - 1991, a historic context study, has been published and can be accessed at the below links. This study provides a thematic framework on the formation and evolution of a self-identified Latino community in Washington, DC, during World War II and through the postwar decades. It also provides an overview of the economic, cultural, and social ways in which Latinos and Latinas interacted with the District's built environment and provides examples of building typologies, places, and spaces significant to the formation and development of this community. In addition to the study, [House of Mercy \(Rosemount Center\)](#) and the [Latin American Youth Center \(LAYC\) Building](#) were nominated by the DC Preservation League and designated as historic landmarks, and the documentation for the [Mount Pleasant Historic District](#) was updated to include Latino history.

Prepared by [architectural historian Heather McMahon](#), the study is a collaborative effort between the DC Preservation League and the DC Office of Planning's Historic Preservation Office. The study and its nominations were funded by a [National Park Service's Underrepresented Communities Grant](#).

English Version

Versión en Español

Landmark Update

Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) Building, 3045 15th Street NW



The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) Building, located at 3045 15th Street NW, was constructed as a parsonage in 1915, but is significant for its time as the headquarters for LAYC from 1974 to 1998. Photo from the National Register Nomination Form.

On May 22, 2025, the Historic Preservation Review Board designated the [Latin American Youth Center \(LAYC\) Building](#), located in Columbia Heights at 3045 15th Street NW, as a historic landmark listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites. This nomination was submitted by the DC Preservation League as a part of [The History of the Latino Community of Washington, DC, 1943 - 1991 historic context study](#).

This three-story, Neoclassical Revival style rowhouse was designed by Appleton P. Clark, Jr. and completed in 1915 as a parsonage (or manse) for the reverend of the neighboring Central Presbyterian Church. The Wilson Center (Centro Wilson) was established here in 1971 and provided space for local non-profit organizations and educational programs that supported DC's growing Spanish-speaking immigrant community. LAYC moved into the former parsonage in 1974, just a few years after the last Presbyterian clergy moved out.

In its first decade, LAYC provided after-school and summer employment programs, ESL and General Education Development (GED) classes, and vocational training in automotive mechanics, catering, and clerical skills. In collaboration with El Centro de Arte, mural painting, street theater, newspaper publishing, and music lessons became part of LAYC's core educational programming. This resulted in the *Unity Mural* (1982) in Adams Morgan and three murals (*Canto a la Esperanza*, 1988-90) along Klingle Road NW.

LAYC continued to evolve and change with the community's needs, with new focuses on counseling and mental health, homelessness, and drug abuse. With an increase in gang violence and drug use, LAYC's Drop-In Center (La Peña) was founded in 1988. This safe space included, amongst other things, a pool table and juice bar, and became a popular spot for live music. The Drop-In Center's importance became especially pronounced as a refuge during the Mount Pleasant uprising and riots in May 1991. The Drop-In Center continues to operate out of the space on 15th Street, as LAYC's main office moved to 1419 Columbia Road NW in 1998. Read more about DC's newest historic landmark at the below link.

Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) Building

New Story Map: Don't Tear It Down

The early years of preservation in Washington, DC, and the founding of the DC Preservation League



Don't Tear It Down activists in the early 1970s. Don't Tear It Down was renamed the DC Preservation League in 1984.  
Photo courtesy of the DC Preservation League.

Through photos and audio, a new story map explores the history of DC's preservation movement, the founding of Don't Tear It Down in 1971, and the early years of the DC Preservation League.

Initially founded to save the [Old Post Office](#) from demolition, Don't Tear It Down activists soon expanded their efforts to preserve other downtown buildings, including the [Franklin School](#) and the [Willard Hotel](#). Despite many successes in the 1970s and 1980s, there were also some high-profile losses, such as the demolition of the McGill Building and the old Dunbar High School. In 1978, through the efforts of preservation activists and organizations like Don't Tear It Down, DC finally passed a historic preservation law, the *Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act*. This law has since become a model for preservation ordinances around the nation.

In 1984, Don't Tear It Down became the DC Preservation League. Over the past 54 years, [the DC Preservation League has helped preserve numerous buildings and neighborhoods across the District](#) through historic landmark and historic district nominations, advocacy, and educational programming. Click below to learn more about the organization's founding and its early preservation efforts.

Don't Tear It Down Story Map

DC Preservation League's Annual Membership Meeting



DC Preservation League members gathered for the annual membership meeting at The Whittemore House. Photo by Jason Hornick.

Last month, DC Preservation League members gathered for the organization's annual membership meeting at [The Whittemore House](#) in Dupont Circle. Members received an update on the organization's programming and initiatives, socialized over dinner and drinks, and explored the historic house. The DC Preservation League would like to thank its members and sponsors for another successful year, as well as the evening's hosts, The Whittemore House and the Woman's National Democratic Club. Photos from the evening can be found at the following link.

Membership Meeting Photos

DC Day of Archaeology Festival

June 28, 2025 | 10 AM to 3 PM  
Tudor Place, 1644 31st Street NW  
In-Person, Free



Archaeology Day Graphic. Image courtesy of [Archaeology in the Community](#).

The annual DC Day of Archaeology Festival gathers archaeology organizations in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia together in one location to inform our community about local archaeology resources. The event is organized by [Archaeology in the Community](#) and held in June as part of DC Archaeology Month. This event is family-friendly with activities for children of all ages. Drop by the DC Preservation League's table to say hi!

*This event is free and open to the public. No registration required to attend.*

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

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