



54TH ANNUAL GALA & AWARDS DINNER

THE BROWN PALACE HOTEL
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024

COCKTAIL HOUR - 5PM DINNER & AWARDS PROGRAM - 7PM

Historic Denver's 54th Annual Gala & Awards Dinner returns to The Brown Palace to celebrate the individuals and preservation projects uniting Denver's past with the 21st century. Our largest event and fundraiser of the year is one of a few events granted the rare privilege of taking over the grand Atrium Lobby during the event cocktail portion.

Following the cocktail and networking hour, nonprofit strategist and preservationist Sarah O. McCarthy will be honored with the Keystone Award for lifetime achievement in historic preservation; artist Ed Dwight will receive the Ann Love Award, honoring those who embody the spirit of one of Historic Denver's founders; and Dr. Nicki Gonzales will be honored with the award created specifically to honor a woman who demonstrates Margaret Brown's commitment to community.

Community Preservation Awards will be given to the University Park Historic District in south Denver, Flora House Denver in Capitol Hill, and Park Hill's Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church. Remix Awards, bestowed to projects that successfully blend a historic building with a new development, go to Prodigy Coffeehouse and the adjacent split-level duplex built on the old Globeville Garage site and Rino Art Park in the Five Points neighborhood. This year, we confer a brand-new award, the Infill Award, on the Curtis Park Row Homes — new-build construction located in the Curtis Park Historic District.

Reserve your tickets, today, while they last: [historicdenver.org](https://www.historicdenver.org)

Can't attend this year? Please support us by shopping our silent auction, online October 1-10!



KEYSTONE AWARD

The Keystone Award honors those who have made significant contributions over their lifetime to historic preservation in Denver.

Sarah O. McCarthy — a leader in public service and nonprofit management and a lifelong advocate for preservation

Sarah O. McCarthy is a luminary in the field of historic preservation, with a career spanning decades of dedicated service. Her journey began in Wilmington, Delaware, where a deep-seated appreciation for historic structures was sparked by the demolition of the 1850 school where McCarthy received her elementary education. This early experience ignited a passion that would shape her life's work.

Since moving to Colorado in 1979, McCarthy has used her degrees in Political Science and Public Administration to make impactful contributions across all levels of government, including as Neighborhood Liaison for the City of Denver under Mayor Wellington Webb. She has been instrumental in preserving many of Denver's iconic structures, such as the Washington Park Bathhouse and the El Jebel Shrine, and has guided countless individuals and organizations through the complexities of preservation.

When rumors surfaced in the early 1990s about potential demolitions of historic schools, McCarthy, a volunteer at the time, stepped in to lead a groundbreaking project: Her work with Denver Public Schools, preserving and designating more than 20 historic schools as Denver Landmarks, set a national precedent and ensured that these architectural treasures are preserved for future generations.

McCarthy's ability to secure and manage substantial preservation grants has made numerous projects financially viable, ensuring that Denver's historic buildings are preserved for future generations.



ANN LOVE AWARD

The Ann Love Award honors individuals who may not consider themselves traditional preservationists but have shown initiative, creativity, and commitment in preserving the history, culture and architecture of Denver. The award is named for Colorado First Lady Ann Love, a founder of Historic Denver.

Ed Dwight — a pioneering astronaut and sculptor, defying limits on Earth and beyond

Ed Dwight's life is a testament to resilience, determination, and artistic brilliance. From being the first African American in the Air Force's astronaut program to becoming one of the most celebrated Black artists in the U.S., Dwight has made significant contributions to preserving history and culture.

Dwight's journey began in a racially segregated world. His early fascination with aviation, inspired by a Black Air Force pilot he saw in a newspaper, set the course for his future ambitions. Dwight enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1953, where his skills quickly propelled him through the ranks. At the direction of President Kennedy, Dwight was selected to train as a potential astronaut, becoming the first African American in the Air Force's astronaut program.

Despite his promising career, racial politics prevented him from officially joining NASA's astronaut corps — a setback that redirected his focus. After leaving the Air Force in 1966, Dwight pursued a diverse career, including stints in engineering, real estate, and even running a barbecue restaurant. However, it was in the arts that he truly found his calling.

Dwight's early work, including the "Black Frontier in the American West" series, highlighted the often overlooked contributions of African Americans to the West. The "Jazz: An American Art Form" sculpture series celebrates the cultural legacy of jazz musicians. His public art projects, including the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Denver's City Park and Texas African American History Memorial at the state house in Austin, have transformed urban environments into places of education and reflection. Dwight's legacy is about more than creating beautiful sculptures; it's about preserving and celebrating stories of those who came before us.

In a fitting culmination of his lifelong dream, Dwight achieved spaceflight on May 19, 2024, at age 90, becoming the oldest person ever to reach space.



MARGARET “MOLLY” BROWN AWARD

The Margaret “Molly” Brown Award was created to honor women who live in Margaret Brown’s spirit today by devoting many years to civic life in all its forms, actively engaging themselves in politics, philanthropy, arts and cultural endeavors and historic preservation.

Dr. Nicki Gonzales — Leading the charge for inclusive Colorado history

Dr. Nicki Gonzales has dedicated her life to exploring and amplifying the histories of Latino, Chicano, and Hispanic communities across Colorado and the broader American West. Growing up in Denver, Dr. Gonzales was immersed in the rich cultural traditions of her family, who have deep roots in Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico. This personal connection to the region fueled her passion for uncovering and telling the stories of communities that have often been overlooked in mainstream historical narratives.

As a professor of history and Vice Provost at Regis University, Dr. Gonzales combines academic rigor with a deep commitment to social justice, making significant contributions to the understanding and preservation of marginalized histories. Her research centers on Chicano history and the social and political movements of the American Southwest, including collecting the oral histories of Chicano Vietnam veterans, preserving their stories for future generations.

Dr. Gonzales’ impact extends beyond academia: In August 2021, she made history as the first Latina to be appointed Colorado State Historian. During her term, she made it her mission to broaden the narratives about Colorado’s past, ensuring that the contributions of Latino and Chicano communities were recognized and celebrated. This was a significant milestone, considering that more than 20% of Coloradans are of Hispanic descent and much of Southern Colorado was once part of Mexico. Dr. Gonzales also played a key role in the City and County of Denver’s Latino/Chicano Historic Context Study, which documented the contributions of these communities to the city’s development.

Dr. Gonzales has become a vital voice in the ongoing effort to ensure that the history of Colorado reflects the diversity of its people.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION AWARDS

Community Preservation Awards are given annually to projects, institutions and individuals that have made an exceptional contribution to the preservation of Denver’s heritage. These projects exemplify high quality restoration, the careful consideration of the city’s historic fabric, and a commitment to community. The winners of these awards are essential to Historic Denver’s mission and the organization takes great pride in recognizing those who assist in enhancing Denver’s built environment.

UNIVERSITY PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

When the Denver City Council unanimously approved the creation of the University Park Landmark District in April 2024, the achievement was the culmination of a five-year effort led by the University Park Community Preservation Committee. Their innovative approach set a new precedent for residential historic preservation in Denver: The thematic district, one of only two discontinuous districts in Denver, offers formal recognition to properties with shared historical, architectural, or cultural significance, regardless of their location within the neighborhood.

This innovative preservation strategy ensures that 19 significant structures, which have ties to the University of Denver (DU) and the Iliff School of Theology, as well as notable women, are protected from demolition and their histories preserved for future generations. The Committee’s extensive outreach efforts, including presentations, tours, and the publication of the historic context study University Park: Utopian Colony and Suburb on the South Denver Plains, raised awareness and garnered widespread community support. Their success not only preserves a unique part of Denver’s history but also serves as a model for future preservation efforts across the city.



FLORA HOUSE DENVER

Flora House Denver stands as a shining example of how preservation can rejuvenate historic buildings while fostering community connections. Located in Denver’s Wyman Historic District and designed by architects Lang & Pugh, this impeccably restored 1892 Victorian mansion has been reimagined by owners Jen and Leigh Alderton as a unique boutique hotel.

Their meticulous restoration preserves the mansion’s intricate woodwork, stained glass windows, and other Victorian details, while introducing contemporary comforts that enhance the experience today’s guests expect. Recognized as a Certifiably Green Denver Business, Flora House’s commitment to sustainability is woven into every aspect of its earth-friendly operations, including the use of local products and care for its lush private garden — an urban oasis for guests designed with Colorado’s climate in mind. This gem in Denver’s hospitality landscape is also a testament to the city’s rich architectural heritage.

MONTVIEW BOULEVARD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A cornerstone of Denver’s Park Hill neighborhood, Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church recognized the need to adapt while preserving its 120-year heritage as both spiritual sanctuary and community gathering place. Guided by a campuswide strategic plan to direct restoration and construction decisions for the next 15-20 years, they embarked on an ambitious project in collaboration with Tryba Architects to revitalize the church’s facilities while also retaining their historic character.

The congregation played a pivotal role in shaping this vision, with extensive consultations ensuring alignment and ownership of the project. This collaborative approach led to a successful capital campaign and a restoration that not only preserved but enhanced the church’s historic sanctuaries. Montview’s commitment to social justice and community engagement — rooted in its history, including figures like Martin Luther King Jr. who spoke from its steps — continues to thrive, reinforcing its role as a beacon of hope and connection in Denver’s diverse Park Hill neighborhood.



REMIX AWARDS

This award honors preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration projects that creatively combine the old and new.

PRODIGY COFFEEHOUSE / GLOBEVILLE GARAGE

Prodigy Coffeehouse’s mission goes beyond serving coffee: It provides apprenticeships to young adults from northeast Denver, creating pathways to economic independence and contributing to a more equitable Denver. Their Globeville location is a remarkable example of adaptive reuse, with the 2,000-square-foot space retaining its industrial charm while serving as a coffeehouse, community meeting space, classroom, and Craft Coffee Learning Lab.

MAINSRING, along with Semple Brown Design and Sprung Construction, transformed this former motorcycle maintenance garage next to the interchange of I-70 and I-25 into a vibrant community hub, while also adding a separate residential duplex on the parcel. This project honors the past while creating both new housing and opportunities for the future, reflecting the northeast Denver community’s resilience and forward-thinking spirit.



RINO ARTPARK

RiNo Art Park is a striking example of how creative design can blend the old with the new, breathing fresh life into Denver’s industrial past while addressing modern community needs. Tres Birds and Wenk Associates collaborated on this transformative project, integrating the industrial character of existing structures with new additions to create a space that is both functional and historically resonant.

Originally slated for demolition, parts of the northern existing warehouse were cleverly deconstructed to create a central plaza, retaining the original framework to host swings, lights, and art installations. To the west, an elevated walkway rising 28 feet above ground offers visitors a new perspective on the area while connecting them to the surrounding green spaces, creating a harmonious blend of natural and built environments along the South Platte riverfront. This approach not only preserved the industrial character of the area but also provided a unique architectural narrative that reflects Denver’s evolving urban landscape.

INFILL AWARD

Historic Denver’s newly established Infill Award is presented to new buildings that skillfully blend modern design elements within historic contexts.

CURTIS PARK ROW HOMES / LUMEN HOMES

The 30th and Champa Row Homes are a shining example of how new development can honor historic contexts. Working with Denver Housing Authority (DHA) as part of a redevelopment of the former Platte Valley Homes to create a mixed-income community — and with guidance from the Denver Landmark Preservation office — Lumen Homes built the 4-unit, market-rate Curtis Park Row Homes in the Curtis Park Historic District.

Lumen Homes rose to the challenge of building in a historic neighborhood by creating a multifamily development that is obviously new and yet visually emulates the single-family Italianate style residences that are prominent across Curtis Park. This infill project respects the architectural fabric of the neighborhood’s historic character while addressing current housing needs, embodying the balance between preservation and progress.



All photos courtesy of award winners or Jay Homstad.