



MHPN 2025 Preservation Awards

The Michigan Historic Preservation Network annually presents awards to outstanding projects, people, and organizations that exemplify historic preservation in Michigan. In 2025 fourteen awards were presented in five categories.

Lifetime Achievement Awards



Wesley L. Andrews, In Memoriam. Wesley L. Andrews (1951–2023), a Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians archaeologist and historian, dedicated his life to collaborative historic preservation in Michigan. Wes led community-driven investigations at sites like Greensky Hill Indian United Methodist Church and the Circle of Trees. By training LTBB youth and Tribal staff in archaeological methods and working alongside non-Native scholars, he bridged cultural and scientific perspectives. Wes recorded Odawa farmsteads across ancestral lands, co-authored a chapter on agricultural adaptations, and facilitated NAGPRA reburials, honoring both artifacts and ancestral remains. Through mentorship and partnership, Wes forged a lasting model of reconciliation and stewardship, leaving a profound legacy for future generations.

Amy Arnold, Lansing. Amy L. Arnold was honored for her 26 years of transformative work at the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office. A visionary leader, Amy spearheaded groundbreaking projects like *Michigan Modern*—which redefined Michigan’s legacy in design—and the *West Michigan Pike* heritage tourism initiative. She led five statewide preservation plans, supported over 80 local historic districts, and secured more than \$1 million in grants for cultural resource documentation. Her work to document African American civil rights sites expanded the reach and inclusivity of Michigan’s preservation efforts. From saving mid-century modern landmarks to elevating tourism and community heritage, Amy’s legacy is one of innovation, collaboration, and deep public impact. She leaves Michigan’s preservation landscape stronger, more inclusive, and more connected to its past than ever before.





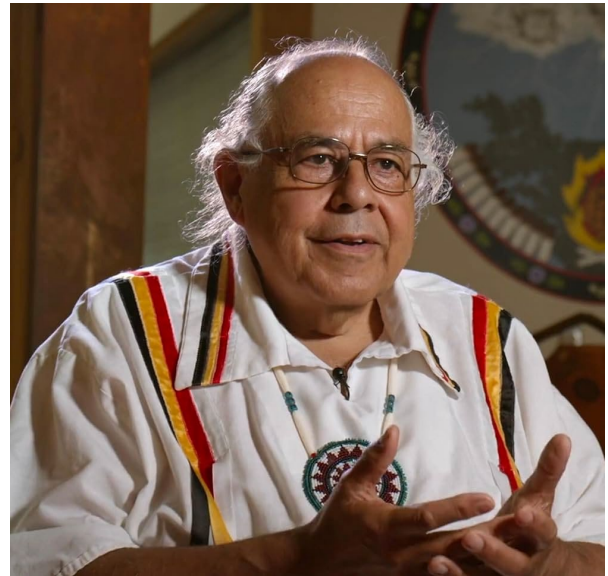
Janet G. Brashler, Hudsonville. Janet Brashler's dedication and contributions to Michigan archaeology over more than four decades cannot be overstated. Following work for the U.S. Forest Service in Michigan and West Virginia, Jan taught and conducted research at Grand Valley State University from 1990-2018, serving as a Professor and Curator of Anthropology. She is a respected expert on Precontact Native American ceramics and the rich cultural heritage of the Grand River watershed. Establishing good relationships between the archaeological and tribal communities is at the heart of her work. Jan has taught numerous field schools, has too many successful students to name, and has influenced many of her colleagues' research.

Lisa Croteau, Niles. Always committed to public service, Lisa became the Niles Downtown Development Authority Manager in 2000. She recognized the importance of its historic buildings and, in 2001, successfully applied to the LISC National Main Street Program; in 2005, Lisa got Niles into the second cohort of the Michigan Main Street Program. Downtown Niles has benefited from Lisa's skilled and uninterrupted efforts. She joined other preservationists to have the downtown listed on the National Register in 2007. Lisa was an early advocate of the "green" and sustainable potential of historic buildings. As the longest serving Michigan Main Street Manager, her promotion of preservation as foundational to the program has been of inestimable value.



Ken Czapski, Marquette. Born in southwest Detroit and educated at Lawrence Technological University, Ken began his career in the city before answering the call of northern Michigan and moving to Marquette in the mid-1990s. In 2011 he co-founded Sanders & Czapski Associates, focusing on historic building restorations and park planning. For the past decade, Ken has specialized in maritime preservation—restoring remote Great Lakes light stations and life-saving stations under challenging conditions. He's also a passionate advocate for affordable housing, rehabilitating homes in Wyandotte through the Community Alliance and serving on the board of Marquette County Habitat for Humanity. As a founding member of SOS Vermilion, he's led volunteer efforts to save the 1876 Life-Saving Station on Lake Superior's shore. A skilled carpenter and dedicated community member (you'll spot him shoveling snow in Marquette's east side!), Ken's hands-on approach and collaborative spirit have made a lasting impact across the state.

Frank Ettawageshik, Harbor Springs. Frank has dedicated over four decades to protecting Indigenous rights, the environment, and cultural heritage across Michigan and beyond. A former Tribal Chairman of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Frank helped secure tribal sovereignty, foster environmental stewardship, and expand tribal resources. His leadership led to the landmark Tribal and First Nations Great Lakes Water Accord and played a key role in the creation of the \$3.5B Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. A master storyteller, artist, and cultural advocate, Frank has advanced Indigenous representation on the global stage—including at the 2015 UN Climate Conference in Paris—and served on boards like the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Michigan Humanities Council. Guided by the Seventh Generation Principle, Frank’s life work honors both the land and those who walk it.



Barry Polzin, Marquette. Barry has shaped Michigan’s historic landscape for over 50 years, bringing passion and vision to preservation across the Upper Peninsula. Trained at Northern Michigan University and the University of Michigan, Barry’s early discovery of preservation transformed his career. From saving the Holy Family Orphanage—now the award-winning Grandview Marquette Apartments—to reviving historic landmarks like the Union Block, Central School in Iron River, and the Richter Brewery in Escanaba, his projects balance respect for the past with contemporary design. As a teacher, architect, and advocate, Barry has inspired generations and proven that great preservation doesn’t stop at the Mackinac Bridge. His legacy is a testament to the power of persistence, stewardship, and deep regional pride.

Preservation Gem Award

Presque Isle District Library’s Historic Rogers Theater, Rogers City. Built in 1937 and beautifully restored by the Presque Isle District Library, this Art Moderne treasure has become a thriving cultural hub in northeast Michigan. Once nearly lost, the theater now hosts films, live performances, community events, and more—all while retaining its historic charm. With over \$125,000 in grants secured since 2016, the library has led remarkable restoration efforts, including a dramatic revival of the iconic marquee, capped by a joyful “Lights On” celebration in 2023. Now listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Rogers Theater is a shining example of how historic preservation fuels community pride and revitalization. When the marquee lights are on, downtown Rogers City shines!



Building Awards



Michigan Central Station, Detroit. Michigan Central Station's transformation from a long-abandoned relic to a modern mobility hub exemplifies Detroit's resilience and commitment to historic preservation. Originally opened in 1913 as the world's tallest train station and a bustling transportation hub, its decline left the majestic Beaux-Arts building dormant for decades. The recent adaptive reuse project, involving over 3,000 professionals and 1.7 million work hours, has meticulously restored signature elements—such as the iconic Guastavino tile vaulting and original stone and marble details—while integrating state-of-the-art, energy-efficient systems that reduce carbon emissions by 63%. Advanced technologies like laser scanning and 3D printing were employed alongside traditional craftsmanship to honor the building's rich legacy. Today, the revitalized station serves as a vibrant cultural and innovation center, spurring economic growth in the Corktown neighborhood, creating jobs, and reaffirming its role as a symbol of hope and community renewal.

Rudy's Prime Steakhouse, Clarkston. The historic structure at 9 South Main, built in 1915/16, has long been a cherished downtown landmark in Clarkston. Originally constructed as a car dealership and service station, the building later evolved into a grocery destination—first hosting a major grocery branch in the early 1940s before becoming the beloved Rudy's Market in 1954. Over time, the market earned a reputation for its culinary specialties and extensive wine selection, becoming an integral part of the community. In 2020, buoyed by strong community support, the property underwent an ambitious project to adapt the market into a premier steakhouse—a transformative phase in revitalizing downtown's dining landscape. Historic photos and selective demolition revealed original openings on the east and south facades, reconnecting the interior with its storied past. A dedicated preservation team meticulously restored the iconic stone façade, installed new windows, and rehabilitated the historic neon sign in full compliance with preservation standards. Reopened in October 2024, the renovated space not only preserves an important piece of local history but also enriches downtown by creating a vibrant, inviting space that honors the past while embracing a promising future.





Wayne County Hamtramck Stadium, Hamtramck. Hamtramck Stadium's restoration is a model of historic preservation, honoring its legacy as a 1930 Negro League ballpark. After decades of disrepair, a comprehensive Historic Structure Report guided its rehabilitation, identifying preservation needs, safety upgrades, and accessibility improvements. Funded in part by the African American Civil Rights Program, work focused on restoring the grandstand's roof, seating, and structure, while preserving key historic elements like the chain-link backstop. New metal roofing, wood seating, and improved drainage were carefully designed to match original materials and ensure modern functionality. Nearly half of the support columns

required major repairs due to corrosion, and the brick field wall was meticulously restored. Accessibility was integrated through field-level seating and ADA-compliant pathways, all sensitively designed to preserve the stadium's character. Reopened in time for Juneteenth 2022, the stadium now hosts over 150 annual events, providing a vital community hub and celebrating the history of Negro League baseball and civil rights in Hamtramck.

Tax Credit Award

Garfield Landing, Sault Ste. Marie. Garfield Landing in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, is a shining example of adaptive reuse done right! This \$13M affordable housing development transformed the long-abandoned, 1898 Garfield School into 14 beautiful apartments while preserving its historic character. A new building added 18 more units, blending the old and new to meet critical housing needs. Led by a dedicated redevelopment partnership, this project retained original architectural elements and met National Green Building standards. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2022. From custom-replicated windows to a restored façade and ADA-accessible units, Garfield Landing preserves community history while creating a brighter future.



Government-Institution Award



Archives Department, Ann Arbor District Library, Ann Arbor. ANN ARBOR 200 launched in 2019 to commemorate the city's 2024 Bicentennial with 200 digital releases, building on the Ann Arbor District Library's acquisition of the Ann Arbor News archives in 2009. Under the Archives Manager's leadership, staff solicited community pitches and commissioned over 25 documentaries—among them “There Went the Neighborhood,” on the 1965 desegregation of Jones School—and released the complete 50-year run of the Ann Arbor Observer. Additional initiatives featured papercraft architectural kits, a history-themed Summer Game with 14,000 participants, a LEGO model of the lost courthouse, and 15 GPS-enabled “SmartTours”

walking tours. A year-long film festival showcased local narratives, while interactive photo overlays let viewers swipe between historic and contemporary streetscapes. Interviews with figures like Ken Burns and the city's first Black mayor deepened the storytelling. The project also digitized the Huron Valley Advisor, powwow archives, and 115 years of school yearbooks, and released 400 slides from town historian Wystan Stevens's collection. ANN ARBOR 200 has permanently expanded the community's historical record and engaged residents across generations.

Washtenaw County Historic Preservation Department, Washtenaw County.

Since becoming Michigan's only county-wide Certified Local Government in 1974, Washtenaw County has balanced growth and heritage across 16 historic districts, protecting rural schoolhouses and mid-century neighborhoods. Their award-winning HistWeb GIS database, launched in the early 2000s with CLG grants, shares site surveys and photos. A 2021 Programmatic Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office streamlines Section 106/110 reviews for HUD-funded projects, fostering affordable housing and community revitalization. With over \$215K in CLG grants since 2009, the County has funded master plans, heritage tours, and National Register nominations. In 2024, they relaunched Preservation Awards, completed new resource surveys, and added Native American trails and village data to HistWeb—ensuring a more inclusive history. This County-wide approach models sustainable development and community engagement.



In Memoriam

The Michigan Historic Preservation Network also recognized members of the preservation community who passed on since the 2024 awards ceremony.



Shirley Beckley
Chronicler of Ann Arbor's Black History



Ray Detter
Ann Arbor Historian and Preservationist



Jane Bird Schmiedeke
Ypsilanti Historian and Preservationist



Scott Grammer
Legal counsel for SHPO and Review Board