



CHICAGO  
CULTURAL  
ALLIANCE

# ACTIVATING HERITAGE

Presented by  
THE  
CHICAGO  
CULTURAL  
ALLIANCE

MARCH 31, 2025  
UIC STUDENT CENTER EAST  
750 S HALSTED ST, CHICAGO, IL

## About This Event

The Chicago Cultural Alliance's mission is to connect, promote, and support centers of cultural heritage for a more inclusive Chicago. We are an active consortium of over 40 Chicago-area cultural heritage museums, centers, and historical societies that span 23 neighborhoods and 11 suburbs around Chicago and represent over 30 different cultures. Our vision is a city where all communities have a voice, and cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration are an integral part of Chicago's civic fabric.

Many people were involved in the making of this conference. We would like to thank the University of Illinois at Chicago for hosting, our Member organizations for participating, our Board of Directors for supporting, our Staff for planning, and our Volunteers for helping. All of you have made it possible to be here today. Activating Heritage is supported by...



Illinois  
**ARTS**  
Council



## Who We Are

### Board of Directors

John Russick, President  
Rebecca(Becky) Amato, Vice President  
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### Staff Members

Dr. Mónica Félix,  
Executive Director  
  
Michael Scott,  
Programs & Membership Manager

Pooja Das,  
Operations Manager

### Contact Us

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(312) 846-6814  
<https://www.chicagoculturalalliance.org/>

# Information

Here is some helpful information for a successful conference experience.

## Location

Student Center East  
750 South Halsted Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60607

## Parking:

For all events taking place in Student Center East, parking is available in the Halsted and Taylor Street Parking Structure (760 West Taylor Street). The entrance to this parking structure is on Taylor Street. Upon entry, guests should take a ticket and upon exit, guests should present this ticket to the cashier and pay the appropriate total (cash, debit cards, credit cards are accepted at this lot). Cost is \$15 for the day.

## Connecting to WiFi Network

Use **Wireless Network UIC-Guest**, open a web browser, authenticate with either of the following login and password information below.

Login: ahcc\_2  
Password: nonr5apo

Login: ahcc\_3  
Password: impu8har

## Dining Services Student Center

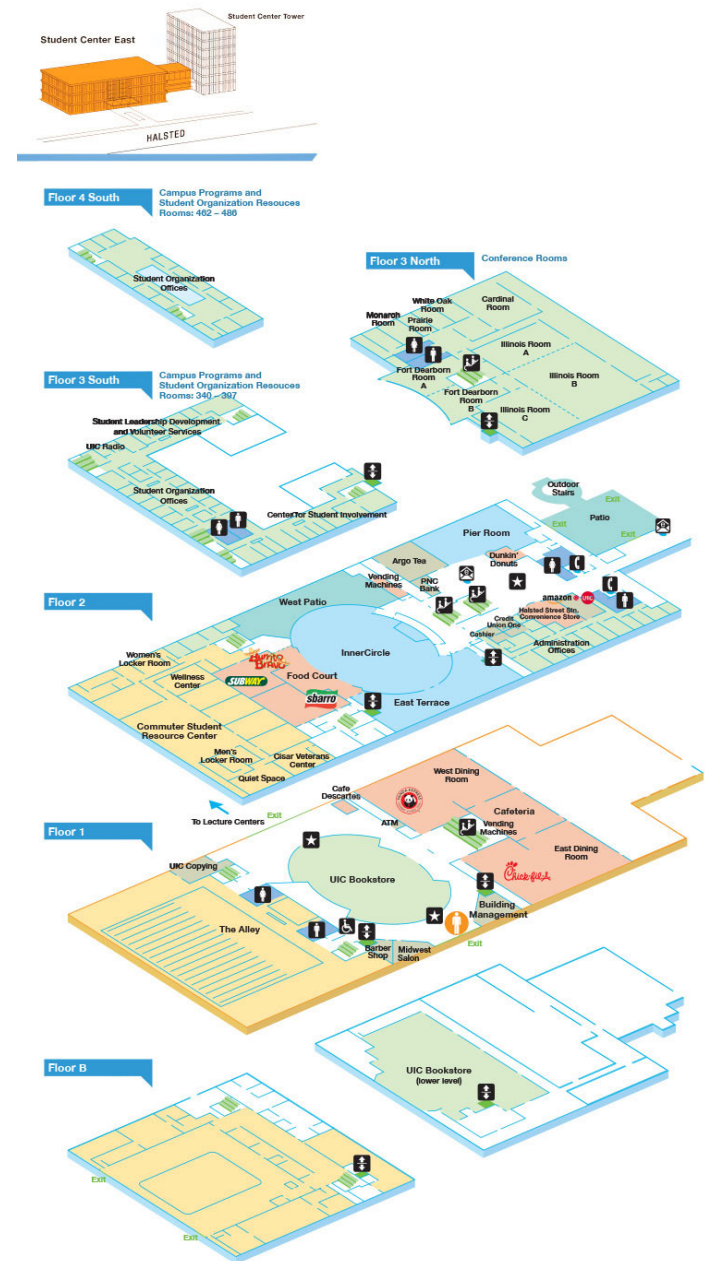
### East Locations:

Moes Southwest Cantina  
Dunkin' Donuts  
Panda Express  
Halal Shack  
Chick-fil-A  
Market at Halsted  
DeWitt's Cookies  
Sushi Do  
Halsted Stop  
605 Commons

Help shape the future of our next Activating Heritage Conference by completing this 5-minute survey!



# UIC Student Center East Map



# Conference Schedule

10:00-10:45 AM	<b>Check-in &amp; Breakfast</b>
10:45-11:00 AM	<b>Opening Remarks</b> CCA President John Russick   CCA Executive Director Mónica Félix
11:00-11:30 AM	KEYNOTE ADDRESS
11:30-11:40 AM	Coffee Break

## Session #1 (4 Rooms)

11:40 AM -12:40 PM	<b>OPERATIONS</b> - Taking Your Fundraising to the Next Level (IL- AB)  <b>PROGRAMS</b> - Centering Care, Consent, and Community in Cultural Storytelling (Dearborn B)  <b>CURATORIAL</b> - Digitizing Cultural Identity: Preserving Chicago’s Filipino and Puerto Rican Histories (IL C)  <b>MARKETING</b> - From Like to Love: Developing an Online Presence that Resonates with Audiences (Cardinal)
12:40-2:00 PM	<b>**Guided Tour of UIC-Latino Cultural Center’s indoor mural: The Awakening of the Americas**</b> Meet Tour Guides in IL-AB   Attendees are invited to dine at their own expense in the UIC Student Center East Building.

## Session #2 (4 Rooms)

2:10-3:10 PM	<b>OPERATIONS</b> - Grants for Cultural Heritage Centers (IL AB)  <b>PROGRAMS</b> - Bridging the Gap Between Cultural Heritage and Leadership (Dearborn B)  <b>CURATORIAL</b> - Curating Exhibits During Wartimes (IL C)  <b>MARKETING</b> - Media Relations for Cultural Heritage Institutions (Cardinal)
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3:10-3:30 PM	<b>Coffee Break</b>   Registrants Move to Breakout Rooms For Session #3
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## Session #3 (4 Rooms)

3:30-4:30 PM	<b>OPERATIONS</b> - Building Your Volunteer Base (IL- C)  <b>PROGRAMS</b> - Getting Started with Collecting Oral Histories (Dearborn B)  <b>CURATORIAL</b> - Community Gardening as Cultural Heritage Practice and Social Action (IL - AB)  <b>MARKETING</b> - How to Enhance Your Web Presence (Cardinal)
4:30-5:00 PM	<b>Coffee Break</b>   Transition to Student-Focused Sessions

## Session #4 (All Sessions in IL-AB)

5:00-5:45 PM	<b>Volunteerism as Activism</b>
5:50-6:35 PM	<b>Nonprofit Jobs Roundtable</b>
6:40-7:25 PM	<b>Interactive Workshop</b>   Getting Engaged with Local Community Centers as Intern or Volunteer
8:00 PM	<b>Official End Time of Activating Heritage 2025</b>





# Conference Sessions & Speakers

## **Taking Your Fundraising to the Next Level: How to Raise Money By Building Relationships (IL- AB)**

**William Myatt** (Major Gift Solutions)

## **Centering Care, Consent and Community in Cultural Storytelling (Dearborn B)**

**Tom Clowes**

Tom Clowes, Co-Executive Director of Crossing Borders Music, founded the organization and served as its Board President from 2011 to 2015, at which time he became Executive Director.

Crossing Borders Music is a multicultural organization of color that shares the stories and music of those whose voices are suppressed because of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, other identity, or related trauma. We do this through free, accessible programs in community spaces in service and affirmation of our communities and collaborators. The mission of Crossing Borders Music is to use music to promote the dignity of people from all cultures.

**Bora Un**

Bora Un is the managing director of ART WORKS Projects, a Chicago and The Hague-based visual arts non-profit dedicated to advancing social justice and human rights through documentary film and photography. Founded in 2006, AWP's projects have been presented on five continents, in 35+ countries, with 225 partners, and in collaboration with more than 200 artists to produce visual advocacy tools which produce action on human rights crises at the grassroots, media, and policy levels. Outside of her role at AWP, Bora runs an independent consulting practice offering strategic consulting services to arts and culture, non-profit, and higher education institutions.

**Kaoru Watanabe**

Kaoru Watanabe is a nurse by training and has worked in various multidisciplinary environments throughout her career in Japan, Egypt, and the

U.S. Since 2008 she has been working with the National Cambodian Heritage Museum & Killing Fields Memorial and the Cambodian Association of Illinois, where she integrates holistic approach to health; knowledge of intergenerational transmission of culture, history, and trauma; and the power of arts in healing. She received her B.S from St. Luke's College of Nursing in Tokyo, Japan, and M.S. from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She conducted her dissertation research with Cambodian families residing in Chicago.

## **Digitizing Cultural Identity: Preserving Chicago's Filipino and Puerto Rican Histories (IL C)**

**Jessica BrodeFrank**

Jessica BrodeFrank (Moderator) spent the last decade in cultural heritage institutions, running DAMS, digital humanities research, and digital curation. She held positions at the Georgetown University Library, Adler Planetarium, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, and Smithsonian's NAA, Gardens, NPG, and NMAAHC. She completed her doctorate in Digital Humanities at University of London, and currently serves a joint appointment as Assistant Clinical Professor and Digital Projects Librarian at the University of Illinois Chicago and Portal Manager for Chicago Collections Consortium. Her research and work focus on crowdsourcing as a means of digital engagement, and the enrichment of metadata taxonomies with these diverse voices as a way towards inclusive search and digital literacy.

**Ashley Dequilla**

Ashley Dequilla, is an artist-filmmaker and archivist of Negrense, Tagalog and Ilonggo descent. In 2023, she obtained her Masters of Fine Arts in Moving Image from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she is currently enrolled as an MA student in Art History. She is a Co-Curator Partner and researcher of the Philippine Heritage Collection at the Field Museum of Natural History and a member of the Association of Moving Image

Archivists (AMIA). Ashley is the collection manager for the Filipino American Historical Society of Chicago, and works as a processing archivist to preserve its analog film collection with University of Chicago, securing the National Film Preservation Foundation award in 2024.

**Jorge Félix**

Jorge Felix is the Program Director of the Exhibition & Collections Program at the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, where he oversees El Archivo Project, a digital initiative dedicated to preserving the history of Puerto Ricans in the Midwest. Under his leadership, El Archivo has digitized over 2,500 images and is progressing toward public access and community exchange of its collection. Félix spearheads curatorial and exhibition development, focusing on local community histories, art, and photographic collections within the broader context of diasporic cultural exchanges. In addition to his community curatorial work, he is a visual artist and a current fellow at both the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center, where he is documenting Chicago's West Side food culture, and the Threewalls Foundation, where his research examines the loss of cultural and racial identity. His work explores the racial divide between Black and Latin@ communities on Chicago's West Side, as well as the role of art and West African spiritual systems in bridging these historical and social gaps.

## **From Like to Love: Developing an Online Digital Presence that Resonates with your Audiences (Cardinal)**

**Demetrio P. Maguidad**

Demetrio P. Maguidad is a strategist, designer, and creative producer spanning 25 years of experience. He is the owner of Polyhythmic, a design strategy and creative studio with a focus on building relationships and projects aimed at creating stories and designing meaningful experiences that enable us to think about the world differently and influence new ways to shape change. His current

focus-area of work prioritizes arts, media, and culture with interests in exploring their relation to social justice, the environment, and innovation. Prior to founding Polyhythmic, he was the Principal Director of Design Strategy for 12 years at LimeRed, a certified B-Corp agency where he worked with social entrepreneurs and local and global nonprofit organizations and foundations on business, brand, and product strategy.

## **Grants for Cultural Heritage Institutions (IL AB)**

**Ellen Placey Wadey**  
**Mark Hallett**

**Dr. Ignacio López**

Dr. Ignacio López, is an accomplished leader in arts, education, and nonprofit management, serving as the Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance (PRAA). Born in San Juan and raised in Caguas, Puerto Rico, he is dedicated to preserving Puerto Rican heritage and fostering cross-cultural exchange. With a background in higher education leadership, including roles as President of Harold Washington College and Dean at National Louis University, Dr. López has championed Latino student success and secured major funding for STEM programs in underserved communities. An author and speaker, he has written *Keeping It Real and Relevant* (2017) and *The EQ Way* (2024), focusing on leadership, emotional intelligence, and cultural advocacy.

## **Bridging the Gap Between Cultural Heritage and Future Leadership (Dearborn B)**

**Dr. Melanie Flores**

Dr. Melanie Flores is a passionate nonprofit leader and arts advocate with expertise in program development, grant funding, and community engagement. As Senior Program Director at the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance (PRAA), she oversees the strategic growth and impact of PRAA's music, arts, and cultural programs. With a strong

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# Sessions & Speakers (continued)

background in fundraising, Dr. Flores has helped secure millions in philanthropic support for arts education and community initiatives. She specializes in building cross-sector partnerships and expanding access to high-quality arts programming. Previously, she held leadership roles at Kids First Chicago and National Louis University, advancing education equity and inclusion. Dr. Flores holds a doctorate in Higher Education Leadership, a Master of Science in Production, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. A published author on culturally relevant pedagogy, she continues to champion equitable access to arts and education.

## Curating Exhibitions During Wartime (IL C)

### Adrienne Kochman

Adrienne Kochman, PhD is an art historian, curator and educator from Chicago. Formerly Associate Professor of Art History and Adjunct Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Indiana University Northwest, she currently teaches at the SAIC and since 2017, is curator at the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art. Projects include Increment: Barbara Cooper, Shona MacDonald, Yoonshin Park (2018); Raw Reckoning: Michael Paxton (2019) and Michel Andreenko: Revisited and Michel Andreenko and Ukrainian Artists in Paris (2022) on the Ukrainian modernist. Agency: Craft in Chicago from the 1970s-80s and Beyond is her latest project for Art Design Chicago 2024, supported by the Terra Foundation.

## Media Relations for Cultural Heritage Institutions (Cardinal)

### Carrie Shepherd

Carrie Shepherd is a reporter at Axios Chicago, a daily newsletter covering news, culture and curiosity in Chicago. Before that, Carrie was the founding executive producer of City Cast Chicago, a daily podcast and newsletter about all things Chicago. She was also a reporter, producer and

editor at WBEZ, Chicago's NPR station, for 15 years.

### Diane Bou Khalil

Diane Bou Kalil is an accomplished engagement and audience leader, Diane has five years of immigration journalism experience. As Marketing and Engagement Manager, Diane leads Borderless' award-winning field canvassing work and works to make sure the news outlet's reporting reaches those who need it most. After growing up in Lebanon, Diane earned her bachelor's degree in sociology from Northeastern Illinois University and a master's degree in international studies from DePaul University. She is also an alumna of the Emma Bowen Foundation Leadership Program and previously taught journalism at After School Matters, a nonprofit serving Chicago teens.

### Gwen Ihnat

Gwen Ihnat is the inaugural Arts & Culture Editor at Block Club Chicago, a vital nonprofit hyperlocal newsroom covering all of the city's neighborhoods. A lifelong Chicagoan, she was a writer and editor for The A.V. Club, the pop-culture arm of The Onion, for several years, and an editor at the Chicago History Museum for nearly a decade. She was also a writer and editor in the newsroom at WBBM-AM, Chicago's only all-news radio station, and has written for publications like Entertainment Weekly and The Wrap. She lives in Ravenswood with her husband, teen twins and pandemic puppy.

## Building Your Volunteer Base (IL- C)

### Ezekiel Alexander

Ezekiel Alexander is the Volunteer Relations Coordinator at Chicago Cares. He currently serves as a board member for Dekalb Pride and organized anti-racist demonstrations in the community. Mr. Alexander is a proud GenZ-er who takes a community-centric approach to volunteer cultivation. Ezekiel's experience as a community activist both on the ground and behind the scenes allows him to bring authenticity in leadership from an

anti-white supremacist lens.

### Layne Borden

Layne Borden is the Community Engagement Manager at the Swedish American Museum: working to coordinate volunteers both for day-to-day tasks of a small museum, and for large events like Andersonville's Midsommarfest. She has worked with volunteers for the past four years, seeking to uplift and connect those in the Museum's community.

### Robert Pabon

Rob is an accomplished non-profit leader and community organizer who has dedicated his life and career to creating opportunities for others and moving folks to action. Rob was elected 5th Ward Alderman in April of 2021. Prior to beginning his four-year term on May 11th, 2021, Rob served on the Board of Education for Berwyn North School District 98. He is also the co-founder of the Berwyn Free Library Initiative, a grassroots organization that promotes bi-literacy, community building and access to resources for all. In his current role at Citizen University, he coaches community leaders across the country to build civic culture and strengthen civic faith in their neighborhoods.

## Community Gardening as Heritage Practice and Social Action (IL - AB)

### Andrew Leith,

Andrew Leith is a Ph.D. candidate at Northwestern University in the Anthropology Department with a focus on historical archaeology, heavy metal soil toxicity, first-voice histories, and community gardening throughout the Chicago-land area. His research explores how nearly two centuries of heavy industry in urban Chicago have affected soil toxicity in marginalized communities where community gardening plays a significant role in wellbeing, and what communities are doing today to contend with this legacy. Beyond archaeology, Andrew has 19 years of professional

experience in museum anthropology and served as the Director of Cultural Programs and Museum Practice at CCA from 2017-2021. As a fifth-generation Chicagoan he has deep ties to local communities throughout the city as well as an abiding commitment to grassroots heritage preservation initiatives.

### Ana Aparicio

Ana Aparicio is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and in the Latino Studies Program at Northwestern University. A cultural anthropologist, her work focuses on Latino communities, youth, race, and local politics and organizing. Her most recent work analyzes various ways that Latinos are altering suburban social, political, and economic landscapes; she pays particular attention to how arts and community gardening initiatives have become central to these communities in recent years.

### Irena Čajková

Irena Čajková is an instructional professor at the University of Chicago, where she teaches both Spanish and Czech. Deeply committed to heritage language education, she has been teaching Czech to children at the T. G. Masaryk School for over 15 years. In addition to language instruction, she volunteers her time organizing cultural programs that promote and preserve Czech heritage. She also serves on the Prague Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International. In partnership with local Hispanic organizations, she co-organizes events that celebrate the connections between the two cultures, especially in neighborhoods where Czech and Hispanic histories meet.

### Paty Flores

Paty Flores is the Community Programs Coordinator at Lincoln Park Zoo. With 5 years of community engagement experience, Paty strives to assist and collaborate with communities to foster curiosity and empathy for nature. Also currently pursuing a graduate degree in biology, Paty is furthering her understanding and practice of inquiry-

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## Sessions & Speakers (continued)

based learning and how one's environment and community can make an impact in an individual's wellbeing. Paty enjoys identifying urban wildlife in the Chicagoland area and learning through conversations with community members.

### Rosalyn Owens

Rosalyn Owens is the Executive Director for the Bronzeville Neighborhood Farm. Rosalyn's husband, Johnnie L. Owens, Jr., who was a well-known urban planner and community organizer in the Bronzeville community started the Bronzeville Neighborhood Farm in 2017, but he was killed in August 2021. Immediately without much thought about it, Rosalyn made the decision to continue her husband's work to grow organic vegetables and educate the community about healthy eating choices at the Farm to continue his legacy.

### Shayna Wildermuth

Shayna Wildermuth is the Greenhouse and Garden Education Manager at the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance. She grew up on a farm in central Illinois and has a degree in horticulture. Shayna manages a greenhouse in which the propagation of many kinds of plants takes place. She also manages an outdoor garden in which all the produce is donated to local organizations. Shayna loves how her position combines her love for people and plants and especially loves leading hands-on experiences with people who live in the Garfield Park neighborhood of which she is also a resident.

### Getting Started with Collecting Oral Histories (Dearborn B)

#### Sherry Williams

Sherry Williams and her three daughters established the Bronzeville Historical Society. They each were eye witnesses to the destruction of African American cultural sites, historic buildings and Chicago Public Housing. In 2002, The Society became a family led 501 c 3 educational institu-

tions to preserve historic sites and history. Public support grew when Civil War era guided tours began. In 2011, the Society received a grant from the Chicago Architecture Foundation to conduct the Underground Railroad / Chicago Freedom Tours. Sherry soon took on the roles of historian, curator, collector, and museum director. She holds a BA in Education, and a Master's in Library and Information Sciences. For 25 years, Sherry has managed the Society's public programs, guided bus and walking tours, mentored students and supervised volunteer staffing. Visitors and guests enjoy storytelling portrayal experiences on the Underground Railroad Tours. Sherry led the effort to place a headstone on the grave of Mrs. Nancy Green on September 5, 2020. Nancy Green was the Original Aunt Jemima pancake product icon. Her success includes a 2023-2024 Mellon Foundation grant for training tour guides. Sherry is also the recipient of the 2017 Northeastern Illinois Outstanding Student Award, the 2021 University of Illinois Urbana - Champaign Distinguished Alumni Recognition Award; a 2022 City of Chicago Commission on Chicago Landmarks - Landmarks Advocacy Award, and a 2024 Illinois Humanities

#### Liú Chen

Liú Chen (they/them) is a queer, trans non-binary, disabled, and abolitionist cultural organizer, descended from the islands of Taiwan and Ireland. They are currently the Oral History Programs Manager at the National Public Housing Museum. They center equity and attentive care in their work, supported by their 2023 Chicago United for Equity Fellowship. They view storytelling and narrative history as key strategies for thawing trauma, empowering connection, and creating radical change. Their personal work focuses on anti-imperialism, queer/trans liberation, Black/Asian coalition movements, and the textures of silence and absence. Their Master's thesis about asian trans kinship can be heard at [www.tidalfats.xyz](http://www.tidalfats.xyz)

### How to Enhance Your Web Presence (Cardinal)

#### Tony Le

Tony Le is an Experience Designer with over a decade of expertise in crafting interactive digital solutions. As the founder of IDE Interactive, Inc., he leads a team that blends design and development to create innovative, user-centered experiences across digital platforms. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Game Development and a Master's in Experience Design, equipping him with a unique perspective on integrating creativity with technology. Tony also teaches as an Adjunct Professor at Columbia College Chicago, mentoring the next generation of designers. Passionate about innovation, he is dedicated to creating tools that empower businesses and elevate user experiences.

#### Demetrio Maguigad (Moderator)



## Our Core Members

Abrahamic Center for Cultural Education  
American Indian Association of Illinois  
American Indian Center of Chicago  
APIDA Arts Festival  
Assyrian Cultural Foundation  
Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture  
Bronzeville Historical Society  
Bronzeville Children's Museum  
Casa Michoacan  
Center for Native Futures  
Center of Peruvian Arts  
Chicago Japanese American Historical Society  
Chicago Scots  
Chinese American Museum of Chicago  
DANK Haus German American Cultural Center  
Dominican-American Midwest Association  
Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago  
Filipino American Historical Society of Chicago  
Friends of the Gamelan  
Haitian American Museum of Chicago  
HANA Center  
Heritage Museum Of Asian Art  
Hibernian Media  
Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center  
International Latino Cultural Center  
Irish American Heritage Center  
Japanese American Service Committee of Chicago  
Kalapriya, Center for Indian Performing Arts  
Korean Cultural Center of Chicago  
Latvian Folk Art Museum  
Magura Cultural Center  
Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum  
Muslim American Leadership Alliance  
National Cambodian Heritage Museum and Killing Fields Memorial  
National Hellenic Museum  
National Indo-American Museum  
National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture  
OPEN Center for the Arts  
Polish Museum of America  
Puerto Rican Arts Alliance  
Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center  
South Asia Institute  
South Side Community Art Center  
Swahili Institute of Chicago  
Swedish American Museum  
T.G. Masaryk Czech School  
Trickster Cultural Center  
Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art  
Ukrainian National Museum

## Partner Members

American Writers Museum  
Art Works Projects  
Borderless  
Brookfield Zoo  
Chicago Architecture Center  
Chicago Botanic Garden  
Chicago History Museum  
Chicago Public Media (WBEZ Chicago)  
Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association  
Choose Chicago  
Cook County Archives and Records Office  
Crossing Borders Music  
The Field Museum  
Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance  
Illinois Humanities  
Instituto Cervantes of Chicago  
Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art  
Jane Addams Hull-House Museum  
Joel Hall Dancers & Center  
Kohl Children's Museum  
Lincoln Park Zoo  
Media Burn  
National Public Housing Museum  
Newberry Library  
The Peace School  
TimeLine Theatre Company  
UIC Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change





**MOSAIC**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025**  
**THE FIELD MUSEUM**



CHICAGO CULTURAL ALLIANCE  
PRESENTS

# JOURNEY CHICAGO

**A citywide, intercultural festival  
of art, ideas, and performance.**

**Coming October 2025**

Join the Chicago Cultural Alliance on a journey  
through Chicagoland's rich cultural diversity.

With events from cultural heritage museums and  
centers in neighborhoods across the city,  
suburbs, and online, Journey Chicago invites you  
to learn about cultures beyond your own.

# ACTIVATING HERITAGE



Chicago Cultural Alliance  
600 W. Jackson Blvd,  
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Chicago, IL 60661

312-846-6814

The Chicago Cultural Alliance's mission is to connect, promote and support centers of cultural heritage for a more inclusive and culturally vibrant Chicagoland. Our vision is a city where every community has a voice in our cultural landscape and inter-cultural collaboration is a vital part of our civic fabric.

Since 2008, the Alliance's programming and services focuses on celebrating diversity, preserving history, and honoring tradition while amplifying cross cultural collaboration. The CCA's current offerings include large-scale collaborative programming, shared services, promotion and networking opportunities throughout the year through our member meetings and conferences.

[www.chicagoculturalalliance.org](http://www.chicagoculturalalliance.org)