



Landmarks Illinois awards first grant through Timuel D. Black, Jr. Grant Fund for Chicago's South Side to the Muddy Waters MOJO Museum

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CHICAGO – Landmarks Illinois has awarded the first grant through its new [Timuel D. Black, Jr. Grant Fund for Chicago's South Side](#) to the Muddy Waters Original Jam Out (MOJO) Museum, a nonprofit working to preserve blues legend Muddy Waters' former home in North Kenwood and convert it into a museum and cultural center.

The MOJO Museum has received a \$2,500 matching grant from Landmarks Illinois Timuel D. Black, Jr. Grant Fund for Chicago's South Side. Landmarks Illinois [launched the new grant fund in May 2020](#) in celebration of the life and work of acclaimed civil rights leader Timuel D. Black, Jr. Generous contributions made at Landmarks Illinois' 2020 Legendary Landmarks Celebration in March, where Mr. Black was honored as a Legendary Landmark, helped fund the new grant program. The fund provides small planning and capital grants to support organizations and people working to preserve the history, culture and architecture of Chicago's South Side, where Mr. Black has spent the majority of his life living and promoting African American history.

The MOJO Museum will use Landmarks Illinois' grant funds to help make critical repairs to Muddy Water's former home as part of the first phase of the four-phase restoration and redevelopment plan for the 131-year-old structure. Phase 1 work includes repairing the roof of the home, replacing and repairing windows, conducting masonry repairs to the exterior of the home and completing interior repairs due to water damage.

Landmarks Illinois has long advocated for the Muddy Waters House, located at 4339 S. Lake Park Ave. and built in 1889. McKinley Morganfield, aka Muddy Waters, purchased the brick two flat in 1954 and lived in it until the 1970s. The building is part

of the North Kenwood Multiple Resource District, a Chicago Landmark District designated in 1992 due to its architectural significance. The home is also eligible for individual Chicago Landmark designation, and a nomination is underway. In 2013, Landmarks Illinois included it on its Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois due to a demolition threat and deferred maintenance on the long-vacant house that was at the time in foreclosure.

“We are proud to offer free technical assistance and financial support to the MOJO Museum board as it strives to celebrate Muddy Waters and share his influential music with all generations of music lovers,” said Bonnie McDonald, President & CEO of Landmarks Illinois. “The revitalized home will become a community asset and a focal point for the incredible musical culture Chicago is known for.”

Chandra Cooper, Waters' great-granddaughter and President of the MOJO Museum, purchased the Muddy Waters house as a way to preserve her family's history. Earlier this year, Landmarks Illinois helped Cooper and the MOJO Museum develop a restoration plan for the structure and aided in the organization's successful application for a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund. Landmarks Illinois thanks the architecture and engineering firm of Klein & Hoffman, and contractor Berglund Construction, for donating their services to develop the plan.

“We are honored and so grateful to be recipients of this grant fund,” said Cooper. “The Muddy Waters MOJO Museum is excited to be working with Landmarks Illinois in preserving our Chicago blues treasure!”

Muddy Waters, a six-time Grammy-winner and a member of both the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Blues Foundation Hall of Fame, created a rehearsal space in the home's basement while he lived there. The MOJO Museum envisions returning the home's basement to a jam session space, with a recording studio and lounge. The first floor of the home will be dedicated to museum space that promotes blues education to young people and provides music class space.

“This exemplary project is precisely why Landmarks Illinois created the Timuel D. Black, Jr. Grant Fund for Chicago's South Side,” said McDonald. “We believe the MOJO Museum contributes to telling the Bronzeville neighborhood's incredible history and, in this way, honors Mr. Black's legacy of civil and human rights activism.”

Future grant application opportunities

Nonprofits, community organizations as well as faith-based and educational institutions are encouraged to apply for funding through the Landmarks Illinois Timuel D. Black, Jr. Grant Fund for Chicago's South Side. The next round of applications for the grant fund are due October 15, 2020.

Grants will provide financial support to people working to restore significant structures or sites located on Chicago's South Side that are under threat of demolition, imminent deterioration or are of such architectural importance that their preservation will benefit the public and community. Structures or sites on the South Side named to Landmarks Illinois' recent [Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois](#) are also eligible for funding.

Grants through the Landmarks Illinois Timuel D. Black, Jr. Grant Fund for Chicago's South Side will range from \$500 - \$2,500 each, depending on need, and will require a one-to-one match. Visit www.Landmarks.org/grants to view complete grant guidelines and to submit a grant application.