



New Mexico Historic Preservation Division  
Department of Cultural Affairs  
[www.nmhistoricpreservation.org](http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org)

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **State Seeks Preservation Award Nominations** *Announces Theme Commemorating Cultural Diversity*

**Santa Fe** — The Cultural Properties Review Committee and the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division are accepting nominations of outstanding preservation work for awards that will be presented in May as part of National Heritage Preservation Month.

HPD and the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance also are seeking events to post in the *Calendar of Events*, which lists dozens of community preservation events held in May statewide.

This year's activities are themed around cultural diversity and a National Park Service initiative to improve documentation of underrepresented communities in the National Register of Historic Places and in its National Historic Landmarks Program, which recently commemorated multiple sites associated with the civil rights movements and the LGBT community. The CPRC and HPD are particularly interested in recognizing work that enhances public knowledge of New Mexico's multi-cultural heritage and preserves it.

"Initiatives at the local, state and national levels are meant to broaden our perspective of history and make it more inclusive than how it was portrayed in the past," said Jeff Pappas, HPD director and New Mexico's State Historic Preservation Officer. "Our office received a diversity grant from NPS that made it possible to hold a tribal symposium on preservation and develop a digital app tailored to recording historical sites on tribal lands."

The CPRC in December listed the Dunbar Elementary School in Vado in the State Register of Cultural Properties and forwarded it for consideration in the National Register. Vado is the only permanent African American settlement in New Mexico, and was established in part around the school built in 1926 during segregation. The Dunbar school and a handful of other New

Mexico schools for black children were departures from the tendency in the South to teach African American children in overcrowded classrooms in substandard buildings. A local Head Start program is currently run from the Dunbar school, which doubles as a community center.

The CPRC will present 10 Heritage Preservation Awards in May in multiple categories to recognize a variety of exceptional preservation endeavors. Although nominations and events that reference the theme are encouraged, all nominations are considered on their merits. Events such as the traditional archaeological hikes and tours, historic district walking tours, informational sessions, and state and national park events also are encouraged for the calendar, which will be posted on HPD's website and accessible on the social media pages of partnering organizations. HPD also will issue its annual May poster interpreting the theme.

Event and award nomination forms are available at [www.nmhistoricpreservation.org](http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org) with guidelines, requirements, and a list of 11 award categories. Award nominations and event listings can be submitted by email. Award nominations are due March 14, although those in the Heritage Publication category must submit two copies of the nominated work by February 15. Event forms are due on March 24.

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