



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**MAYOR EMANUEL HONORS DuSABLE HIGH SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE,
PRESENTS LANDMARK PLAQUE TO SCHOOL ALUMNI AND ALD. PAT DOWELL (3rd)**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel bestowed an official City of Chicago Landmark plaque to DuSable High School today, citing the Bronzeville building's long history of community service while producing graduates that rose to the top of their fields in entertainment, music, publishing, athletics, and other professional endeavors.

"DuSable alumni are a 'who's who' of American culture," Mayor Emanuel said. "I invite every Chicagoan to recognize the building's important role as a community cornerstone and as a springboard to success for generations of students."

The rectilinear, three-story building at 4934 S. Wabash Ave. opened in 1935, when Chicago's rapidly-growing African-American community was predominately confined to a narrow corridor of neighborhoods on the South Side. As the first high school in Chicago exclusively built to serve African-American students, DuSable evolved as a physical manifestation of Southern immigrants' efforts to improve conditions for themselves and future generations.

Under the leadership of school music instructor Captain Walter Dyett, DuSable became one of the most famous high schools in the history of jazz, producing many notable musicians like Dorothy Donegan, Von Freeman, Gene Ammons, Sonny Cohn, John Gilmore, Johnny Griffin, Ella Jenkins and others. Other noted alumni include singers Nat King Cole and Dinah Washington; television producer Don Cornelius; comedian Redd Foxx; Mayor Harold Washington; publisher John H. Johnson; NBA players Nate Clifton, Kevin Porter and Maurice Cheeks; author Dempsey Travis; and historian Timuel Black.

"We celebrate the legacy of DuSable High School and its talented and accomplished alumni who tirelessly advocated for landmark status," said Alderman Pat Dowell, 3rd Ward. "This school was an anchor for those arriving to Bronzeville through the Great Migration and continues to support and educate our youth today."



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The brick, block-long building was designed by Chicago Board of Education architect Paul Gerhardt Sr. in a visually-subdued variation on the Art Deco architectural style that historians have labeled “PWA Moderne.” It’s named for Chicago’s first non-Native-American settler Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable, known today as the “Father of Chicago.”

The building was constructed at a cost of \$2.8 million, exclusive of equipment and furnishings, and originally enrolled approximately 2,600 students. In later years, the facility accommodated more than 4,000 students.

In 2005, Du Sable was reorganized into three small “schools-within-a-school.” Today, the facility is home to the Betty Shabazz International Charter-Du Sable Leadership Academy High School, a charter school serving grades nine through twelve; the Bronzeville Scholastic Academy High School, a four year college preparatory high school; and the Daniel Hale Williams Preparatory School of Medicine, a four-year magnet high school providing focused study on medical fields.

The building was originally suggested for formal landmark designation by the DuSable Alumni Association with the cooperation of Ald. Pat Dowell (3rd). City Council approved the landmark designation in October 2012.

As an official City of Chicago landmark, the building’s exterior elevations are protected from significant alterations or demolition.

The landmark plaque bestowed today will be installed in a prominent place on the DuSable campus.

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