

OREGON HERITAGE SUMMIT

Latinx Heritage Preservation in Oregon: Building a Network April 29, 2021

Note from Oregon Heritage: The summary and recommendations are for the participants of the session and people interested in moving this work forward. Oregon Heritage can support this effort, as it does all heritage efforts in the state, through grants, communications, technical assistance, and the Oregon Heritage Conference.

Facilitator's Summary & Recommendations

Latinx heritage has long formed part of the history and development of Oregon. Though often overlooked, Latinx *Oregonianos* have shaped industry, commerce, communities, foodways, and more. To kickstart a purposeful ongoing statewide conversation on Latinx heritage conservation in the state, the 2021 Oregon Heritage Summit, "Collaboration is Key!" opened with a pre-conference session titled: "Latino Heritage Preservation: Building a Network." The session was facilitated by Latinos in Heritage Conservation executive board members Desiree Aranda and Sara Delgadillo. Attendees received a glimpse of the work by organizations currently documenting and sharing Latinx stories, they also were apprised of networking models through which collaborative efforts of a few can be far-reaching. The discussions from the conference session helped identify possible next steps and recommendations that will ensure Latinx stories form part of the inclusive narrative documented and shared by Oregon heritage organizations and institutions moving forward.

The following are recommendations from the facilitators:

1. Center the Latinx community. Compile an inventory of existing Latinx community organizations and heritage/history-related initiatives. Include present-day organizations and initiatives, as well as any resources for Latinx heritage. The purpose for this exercise is to identify potential partners, build relationships, and identify what is already being done related to Latinx heritage in Oregon. This would make an excellent intern project, ideally a Latinx college student in a related field.
2. Focus on building interest and relationships. As a follow-up to the April 2021 event, host a limited series of virtual events (3-4) centered on Latinx community organizations in Oregon (perhaps identified in the inventory above). Many attendees enjoyed learning and sharing information about existing Latinx heritage work being done in Oregon. Additionally, attendees noted interest in hearing from present-day community leaders representing long-standing Latinx community institutions. Invite representatives from such organizations to share their stories. This programming could be formatted as a speaker series focused on a different theme each time (e.g. Community Organizations, Historic Sites, Labor, Visual & Performing Arts, etc.). This is another potential intern opportunity.

3. Foster continued dialogue. Create an online mechanism for networking and resource-sharing. This might take the form of a listserv, Facebook group, or other online platform. This can help lay the groundwork for any potential statewide network and allows it to happen organically. Managing a platform like this is a long-term commitment so administrative capacity and responsibilities should be considered first.
4. Invest in Latinx community and bolster heritage conservation. Build a foundational effort around Latinx heritage in Oregon, sponsored or funded by Oregon Heritage. A relevant example is the creation of the *Latinos in 20th Century California MPDF*. The induction of the document and designations that formed part of the project mark a pivotal point of investment in Latinx heritage on the part of the California OHP. The multiple subsequent nominations under the MPDF by various organizations and agencies across the state attest the need for the investment and its value.
5. Center and engage youth. Invite young people (high school through graduate school) to future events, programs, and initiatives related to Latinx heritage in Oregon.