



LANDMARKS ILLINOIS

2017 Legendary Landmark Fred Eychaner

Fred Eychaner is a longtime civil rights and peace activist whose work has affected Chicago and the nation for more than 40 years. He is Chairman of Newsweb Corporation and President of the Alphawood Foundation. Fred is known for his philanthropy in the city, especially his support of LGBT organizations, HIV support organizations, arts institutions, public spaces and historic preservation.

Fred was born in DeKalb, Illinois, in 1944. He attended the Medill School of Journalism. In 1971, he founded Newsweb Corporation, a media company, and in 2005, he launched WCPT-AM, Chicago's progressive talk radio station. Fred's lifelong dedication to preserving Chicago's and America's architectural heritage promotes a culture that embraces superior and progressive design. He led efforts in the 1990s to restore and protect Louis Sullivan's masterpiece Auditorium Theater in Chicago. Under his leadership, the Alphawood Foundation heads the current comprehensive restoration of Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois. Many other restoration projects, large and small, have benefitted from his support and guidance.

Fred is active in Democratic politics. Many of his political donations have been made in support of LGBT rights – in particular, the drive for marriage equality in Illinois. A great deal of the LGBT infrastructure in Chicago bears his stamp – he is the largest donor to the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and has been instrumental in the creation and ongoing viability of a number of the most influential LGBT rights organizations in the state.

In September 2010, President Barack Obama appointed Fred a General Trustee to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Fred is one of the first openly gay members of that board. At the Kennedy Center, Fred has served as co-chair of the Architect Selection Committee and member of the Building Committee as the Board of Trustees plans a major expansion of that national institution.

Fred is a former board member of the Illinois ACLU, an early board member and leader of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, and a founding board member and former chairman of the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago. He also serves on the board of the Art Institute of Chicago, as a trustee of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, and on the Visiting Committee for Asian

Art of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 2014, Fred received Lambda Legal's National Liberty Award. In 2015, he was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame.