

Chris & Erin Howard

This week we are happy to name Chris and Erin Howard as the final inductees in Marshfield's 150: Heroes and Leaders, Past and Present register, Chris and Erin Howard were nominated by the North Wood County Historical Society



During the past twenty-plus years, a local couple, Chris and Erin Howard, doing business since 2018 as Howard Properties and Development, have breathed new life into some of the city's iconic downtown business buildings. Their passion for history in general, and Downtown Marshfield more specifically, has led them to specialize in developing projects to provide both commercial and residential spaces in Downtown Marshfield.

Erin shared, "with our business, we feel it is important to highlight our tenants, but Chris also feels it is extremely important to give credit and highlight those in the past who have shaped Marshfield and the buildings that we all have grown to love and embrace today. For example, whenever we purchase and restore a building, it is important to Chris to refer to the building by the original owner's name."

Some of the buildings where you can see Chris and Erin's handiwork include the Noll building, at 111-121 S. Central Avenue, home to Uptown Coffee (moving to The Vault, 211 S. Central Avenue as of Nov. 1) and Kaelie's Kandles & Company. The Deming Building, at 201 S. Central Avenue, home to MOJO's Pasta House, Cajun Cook Shack, and Bleu Plate Deli, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Mema D's, Marshfield Area Habitat for Humanity, Golden Lamb, Elite Massage, Holistic Empowerment and Hub City Times. Hotel Charles, at 170 S. Central Avenue, home to Victory Apparel & Promotions, What Goes Around Comes Around Consignments, Hub City Ice Cream and Charles Apartments. The Upham building, at 200 S. Central Avenue, is home to Dave's Guitar Shop - just to name a few of their restoration projects and properties.

Former Main Street Marshfield executive director, Kaelie Gomez said, "The Howards always have the community at heart. Every decision they make they thoughtfully consider and try to determine an outcome that serves beyond themselves. Revitalization takes risks, and they began taking risks downtown early on. They've championed our cultural center, set an example in quality historic preservation, and invested in our sense of place."

Chris and Erin's efforts in downtown restoration and revitalization haven't gone unnoticed. They have been recognized by Main Street Marshfield for their accomplishments, and earlier this year were given the City of Marshfield Stewardship Award. That award recognized the Howards' efforts to preserve, rehabilitate and modernize many historic buildings within the community and especially within the Central Avenue Historic District, while still maintaining the building's historic integrity. They had previously been recognized by the Wisconsin Association of Historic Preservation Commissions with Awards of Excellence for their work on the Noll and the Deming buildings.

Mayor Lois TeStrake said, "We are fortunate that these two settled here in Marshfield, as they work diligently to keep improving with all their heart and souls." She went on, besides their restoration efforts, "they have both contributed to the city in other ways, Erin as a member of the Main Street Marshfield Board of Directors and the Historic Preservation Commission, and Chris as a member of the Business Improvement District. Two terrific assets to help make our City even greater!"