



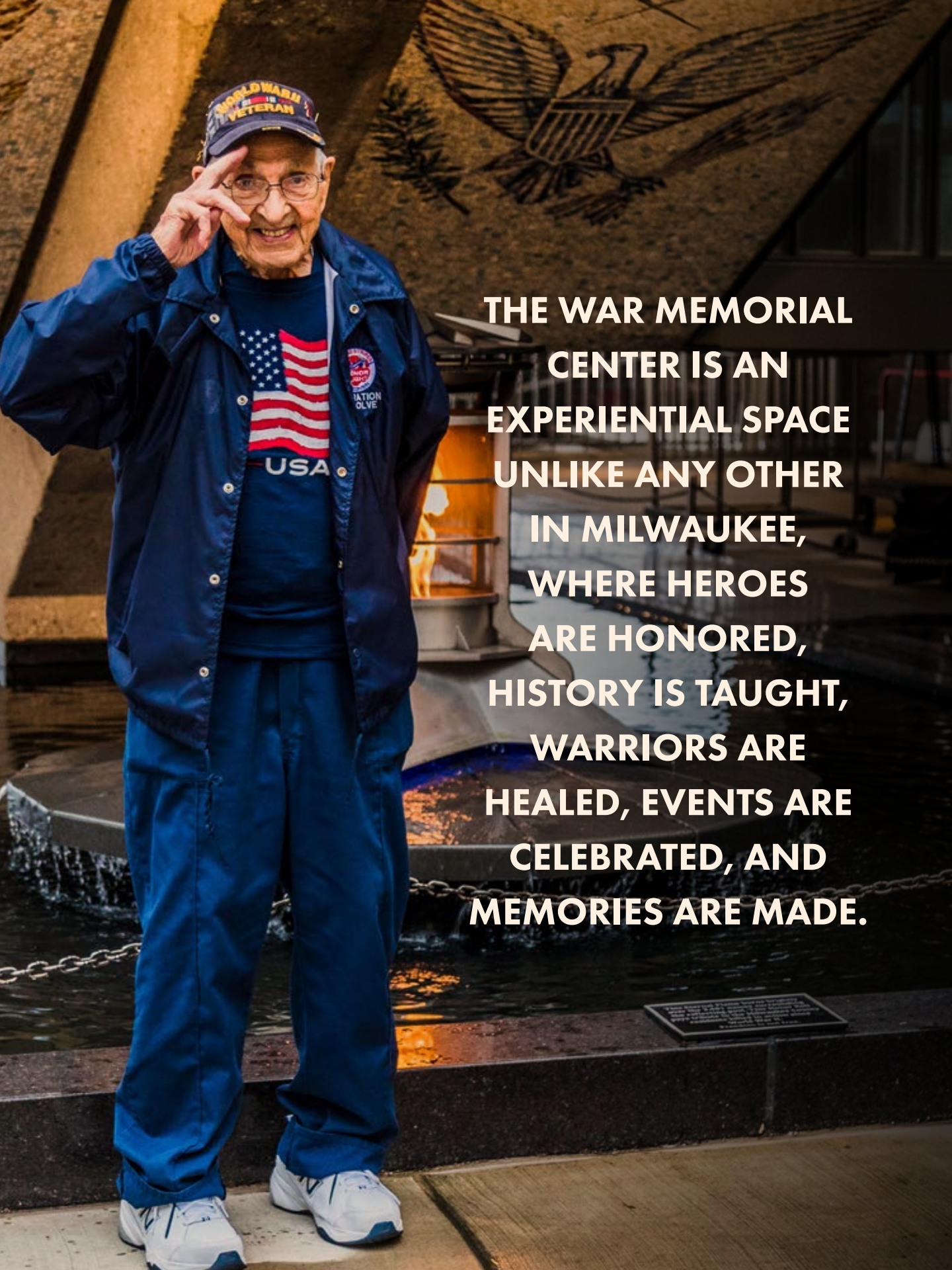
WAR MEMORIAL CENTER

**MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026**



War Memorial Center

**DEDICATED VETERANS DAY 1957
HONOR THE DEAD — SERVE THE LIVING**



THE WAR MEMORIAL CENTER IS AN EXPERIENTIAL SPACE UNLIKE ANY OTHER IN MILWAUKEE, WHERE HEROES ARE HONORED, HISTORY IS TAUGHT, WARRIORS ARE HEALED, EVENTS ARE CELEBRATED, AND MEMORIES ARE MADE.



The War Memorial Center in Milwaukee is a stunning lakefront facility that pays tribute to the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice defending freedom, while remembering and sharing the personal experiences and sacrifices of all veterans and their families. Enthusiastically supported by an engaged community, the facility has a collection of permanent, rotating and visiting exhibits of patriotic, military and war-related historic and contemporary themes that connect citizens with veterans and their experiences. It is a place to educate our youth and adults about the importance of national service and provide an oasis for veterans in need of assistance. The unique setting provides an unmatched venue to celebrate one's special event and create lifelong memories.



OUR VISION

OUR GOALS



- ★ **PAY TRIBUTE** to the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice while defending freedom, while remembering and sharing the personal experiences and sacrifices of all veterans and their families.
- ★ **BE THE PLACE** where citizens connect with veterans and their experiences.
- ★ **EDUCATE** our youth and adults about the importance of national service.
- ★ **PROVIDE** an oasis for veterans in need of assistance.

WE PROMISE

- ★ **TO HONOR** all who serve in the U.S. Armed Forces in defense of the United States of America and our allies.
- ★ **TO INSPIRE** patriotism in people of all ages by telling the heroic stories of our citizens who defend our freedom.
- ★ **TO CREATE** and maintain a world-class campus of memorials and provide access to both permanent and temporary exhibitions.
- ★ **TO ENGAGE** the greater community by providing access to our facility, memorials and exhibitions through innovative outreach, digital learning, and creative experiences.



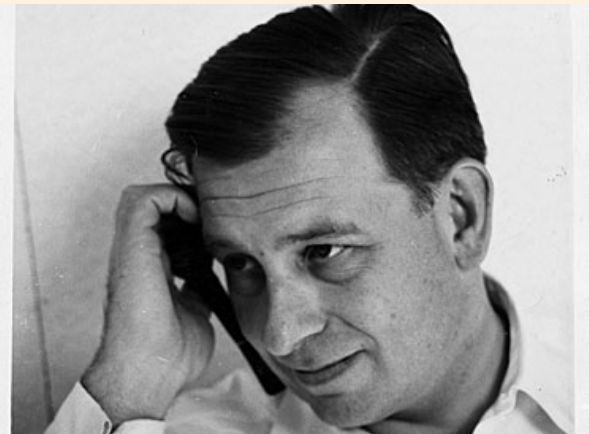
OUR HISTORY



Open to the public on Veterans Day 1957, the War Memorial Center became a symbol of sacrifice, honor, and dedication to all our men and women who wore the uniform and bore the burden of war.



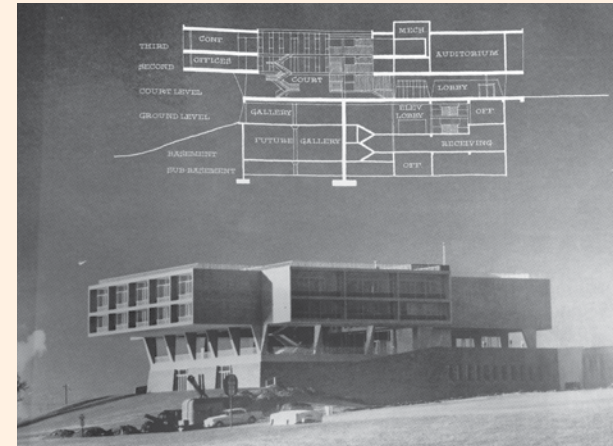
The idea of a cultural-community center dedicated to honoring Milwaukee County's war dead was conceived in 1944. Three local women's groups (Altrusa, Business and Professional Women's Club, and Zonta Club) led the way in establishing the War Memorial Center.



Designed and built by Finnish-born American architect Eero Saarinen, who served in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II. Saarinen was given the War Memorial Center commission following the death of his father, Eliel Saarinen, who was previously awarded the project.

DID YOU KNOW?

After speaking with Milwaukee World War II veterans of the D-Day invasion, architect Eero Saarinen decided to design the War Memorial Center to resemble a German pillbox — the formidable defense bunkers used in Normandy which Allied troops gallantly overcame.



Wisconsin is honored to count the War Memorial Center among Eero Saarinen's prolific mid-century modern accomplishments. Saarinen also designed the iconic Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri along with buildings commissioned by Dulles and JFK Airports, John Deere, and Yale University.



Nationally recognized artist and WWII veteran Edmund Lewandowski was asked by Saarinen to transform the west facing facade of the War Memorial Center. On Veterans Day 1959, two years after the memorial's dedication, Lewandowski's 1.4 million piece mural was unveiled. It features Roman numerals with the start and end dates of World War II and the Korean War.



The War Memorial Center's longtime tenant, the Milwaukee Art Museum, undergoes expansions in 1975, 2001 and 2015 that change the exterior space of the memorial.



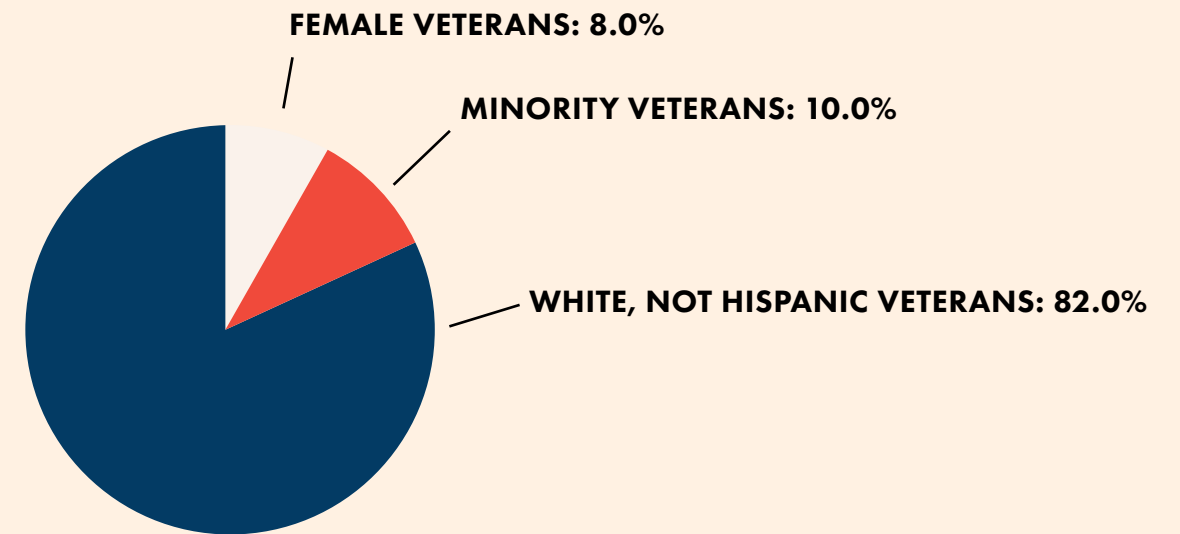
The War Memorial Center stands as a testament to the community's desire for a vibrant multi-use memorial to Honor the Dead by Serving the Living. Built with private funds on land owned by Milwaukee County, this cultural institution remains a jewel for Milwaukee. Recognized in State of Wisconsin statute, the WMC operates with 26% public funding. The remaining funds come from private donations, rental agreements with tenants, event rentals and parking fees.



WHO WE SERVE

The majority of the state's veterans live in southeastern Wisconsin. Our aim is to increase engagement across all segments of our veteran population, ensuring we develop and maintain an inclusive environment where individuals of all ages, race and sexual orientation are welcomed and supported by the War Memorial Center.

WISCONSIN VETERAN POPULATION



**THE WAR MEMORIAL CENTER
IS AN OASIS FOR VETERANS IN
NEED OF SUPPORT**

OUR PLAN



- **PROVIDE SERVICES & SUPPORT FOR VETERANS**
- **PARTNER WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY**
- **INCREASE AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT**
- **EXPAND EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS**

ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY

Starting in 2024, Milwaukee County will begin to eliminate its annual tax levy payment to the War Memorial Center over a ten-year period. County funding currently represents 26% of revenue. To ensure financial stability, we will enhance:

NEW FUNDING STREAMS

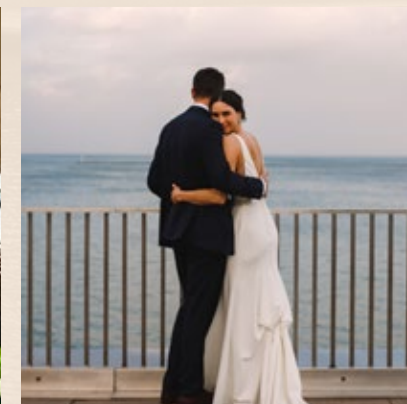
Through established and expanding partnerships, the War Memorial Center will continue to create new, diversified funding streams building upon the successes of events like the Beer Garden and Oktoberfest.

MODERNIZATION

Efficiencies and cost-saving measures will be deployed by staff to reduce operational costs and reduce our energy consumption by improving our carbon footprint.

HOSPITALITY

Improving our hospitality program, we will continue to grow and shape our facility rental processes with an emphasis on client satisfaction.



SUPPORTING VETERANS



HONOR THE DEAD. SERVE THE LIVING.

*That's been our mission since the War Memorial Center was dedicated in 1957.
We continue to find new ways to support the ever-changing needs of the veteran population.*

VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION

As a member of the Southeast Wisconsin Veteran Suicide Prevention Task Force and grantee of the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment, we will continue to educate the community on veteran suicide and help connect veterans to resources.

VETERANS OPERATIONS CENTER

This program offers office space within our building to veteran non-profit groups at a reduced cost.

VETERAN ORGANIZATION PARTNERSHIPS

With an eye to expansion and mission, we will continue to develop partnerships with community groups that forward our goals of supporting veterans.

VETERAN ADVISORY COUNCIL

Comprised of Global War on Terror era veterans and their allies, this council will work to engage the most recent generation of military veterans, entrepreneurs, and professionals.

VETERAN FACILITY RENTALS

Veterans groups will continue to have access to the War Memorial Center at free or reduced cost for use in outreach, fundraising, and membership events.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Since the very beginning, the War Memorial Center has furthered its mission by building collaborative relationships. From the women's groups that fundraised for our genesis to the community partners that make our events possible, we are strongest when we are connected to the community.



EXHIBITS

Both temporary and permanent, the War Memorial Center continues to produce exhibits that draw in tourists, veterans, and the greater community.

HONOR ROLL

Sharing the stories of Milwaukee County service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice, we will continue to research and give life to the names etched in granite on our Honor Roll.

FIELD OF FLAGS

A Memorial Day tradition, we will continue to engage the community to honor the memory of service members who have given their lives for our country with a display of thousands of flags.

SPECIAL EVENTS

By strengthening our connections with Kegel's Inn, Swarmm Events, and Silver Circle Sports we will continue to support our goals of engagement and financial stability with popular events like the summer beer garden, July 3 Celebration of Freedom and Oktoberfest. We also have off-site partnerships with other cultural entities like our neighbors the Milwaukee Art Museum and Summerfest.

EXPERIENCE THE STORIES THAT BUILT OUR NATION

The War Memorial Center was never intended to be a static veterans memorial. Our educational experiences bring to life this memorial and tell the stories of the veterans who served and sacrificed for our freedom.



SERVICE EXPERIENCE DAY

The War Memorial Center's signature education event connecting veterans with students in small group interactions of rotating stations.

LESSON PLANS

Started in 2020, the War Memorial Center will expand its more than 50 virtual lesson plans offered to students of all ages across the country.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Engaging students from across Wisconsin to offer unique educational experiences for new and returning students.

EDUCATION

Which will it be?

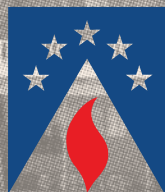


It's up to you!

Original WMC marketing brochure circa 1950

Just like Milwaukee community leaders in the 1940's, we are now faced with a similar question. The War Memorial Center was designed to be so much more than a flagpole or statue. This vibrant, stunning landmark is truly a jewel for Milwaukee. Designed by a world-renowned architect to be an oasis for veterans in need of support.

We Intend To Live Up To That Promise.



War Memorial Center

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Milwaukee, WI 53202

WARMEMORIALCENTER.ORG • INFO@WARMEMORIALCENTER.ORG

COVER IMAGE: Summer 1968 when the War Memorial Center and lakefront were the site of Summerfest's Youth Fest.