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Massachusetts Avenue and North Capitol Street NW

# Holodomor Memorial

Honors Victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932–1933



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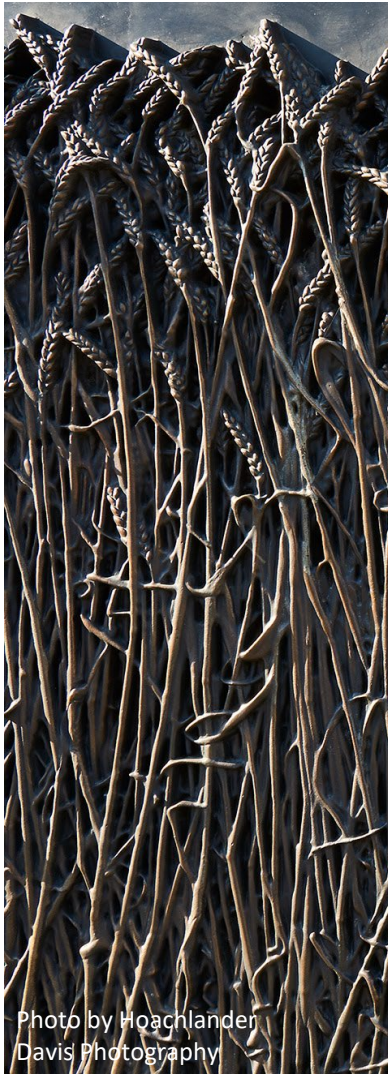


Photo by Hoachlander  
Davis Photography

The Holodomor Memorial to Victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932–1933 opened in DC in November 2015 at the corner of North Capitol Street and Massachusetts Avenue NW. It is a federal memorial, but Office of Planning staff played a role in shaping its design when it was reviewed by the National Capital Planning Commission, Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Memorial Advisory Committee.

It is dedicated to the millions of Ukrainians who perished in the man-made famine of 1932-1933 known as the Holodomor – which means “death by starvation” in Ukrainian. At that time, Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union, wanted to rapidly transform Ukraine into an industrialized, Russian-led, communist world power. Part of the plan was to collectivize agriculture, meaning farmers had to surrender their crop to the state for redistribution among the entire population. The plan led to widespread starvation, which some scholars argue was intentional.

Since 2006, the Holodomor has been recognized by Ukraine and 15 other countries as a genocide of the Ukrainian people carried out by the Soviet government, although whether it was intentional genocide is the subject of international debate. The United States Senate and House of Representatives have passed resolutions recognizing the famine as genocide, but the executive branch has not formally stated this, and the United States does not officially recognize the Holodomor as genocide.

The memorial, designed by Larysa Kurylas, is one of three monuments in Washington, DC, designed or co-designed by women—the others being the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial. The focal point of the memorial is a bronze, bas-relief wall titled “Field of Wheat”. Wheat is the theme not only because its confiscation led to the death of millions of innocent Ukrainians, but also because wheat cultivation is one of the few things that Americans associate with Ukraine.