

NAME:
Yasmine Romero Latin

RESIDENCE:
Monseñor Romero
Apartments
Washington, D.C.
63 Apartments

**Tenant Opportunity
to Purchase Act Deal
(TOPA)**

AFFORDABILITY:
- Low-Income Housing
Tax Credit
(Income Restricted)

*Last updated in 2018

VOICES OUT LOUD

Yasmine

ROMERO LATIN

Yasmine Romero Latin revels in being called headstrong. She defines her life by the battles she has fought and won. From leaving El Salvador and becoming United States' citizen to ensuring the continued vibrancy of her Columbia Heights community in Washington D.C., Yasmine never takes "no" as an answer. For more than five years, she fought for fair rents and safe living conditions from an absentee landlord.



The 114-unit apartment building where Yasmine lived could only be described as "slum-like". With a laundry list of issues, including the near complete absence of working fire alarms, Yasmine and her neighbors lived in conditions that would push many to move out – but Yasmine and her neighbors had nowhere to go.

This negligence came to a head in 2008, when a fire started in the basement of the building and the entire building was soon engulfed by the first five-alarm blaze D.C. had seen in 30 years. In the face of disaster, the tenants fought for their lives, helping to remove seniors and children from their homes to safety. Some residents were forced to escape through windows. By the time emergency crews put the fire out, the damage had been done. Nearly 200 people were now homeless.

Undeterred by this tragedy, Yasmine continued her fight against the ownership. She exercised her and her neighbors' rights under D.C.'s Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act with the help of nonprofit developer, NHT-Enterprise. The building was acquired from its previous owner, and, finally, Yasmine knew her dream of living in a safe and stable home was now a reality. Working diligently with NHT-Enterprise, the apartments were rebuilt with energy efficient improvements that ensured safe, comfortable homes for everyone who wished to return.

In 2014, the building was rechristened Monseñor Romero Apartments - named after Yasmine's hero -the Salvadoran Archbishop who spoke out against poverty, corruption, and social injustices.

Today, Yasmine chairs the tenant association and continues to work hard to keep the Monseñor Romero community vibrant, sustainable, and affordable.