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AFRICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS RECOGNIZED IN NEW HISTORICAL MARKERS

Savannah, GA, October 6, 2008 -- The Georgia Historical Society in partnership with Sam's Club and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. announces the dedication of two new historical markers in Savannah. Markers for the Beach Institute and St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church will be dedicated on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at their respective locations. The installation of these historical markers brings to a close an initiative, funded by Wal-Mart, to recognize sites and events significant to the African-American experience in the Savannah area. The dedications are free and open to the public (see below for specific times and locations or visit www.georgiahistory.com).

"Wal-Mart is honored to have sponsored these markers recognizing the important contributions of African American individuals and institutions to the Savannah region's rich cultural diversity and proud heritage," says Glen Wilkins, Senior Manager, Public Affairs, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. "It has been our privilege to work with the Georgia Historical Society to open new pages in Georgia's history to the people who live here and those who visit."

As part of this initiative, the Georgia Historical Society's community advisory committee identified four subjects that reflect the larger contributions of local institutions and individuals who influenced not only the history of Savannah, but of Georgia and the nation as well. The two previous historical markers identify the contributions of local physicians Cornelius and Alice Woodby McKane, and of General David Hunter's General Orders No. 7, a precursor to Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

"GHS is pleased to have had the opportunity to work with community leaders and representatives to recognize the historic nature of these particular institutions to the city's history," said GHS President and CEO, Dr. W. Todd Groce, "and to highlight the broader significance of educational and religious institutions to African-American communities throughout Georgia,"

The first ceremony to be conducted on October 16, recognizing the historic Beach Institute, will take place at 12:00 p.m. at 502 E. Harris Street in downtown Savannah. The marker text reads as follows:

Beach Institute

The Beach Institute began in 1867 as the first school in Savannah erected specifically for the education of African Americans. It was named for Alfred Ely Beach, benefactor and editor of *Scientific*

American. Following the Civil War, the Freedmen's Bureau, American Missionary Society, and the Savannah Educational Association purchased land and with the labor of newly freed slaves built this school and a teachers' house on this site. The Beach Institute, birthplace of First Congregational Church and the Savannah Boys Club, closed in 1919. Operated by the King-Tisdell Cottage Foundation since 1989, today the Beach Institute serves as an educational and cultural center.

The second marker will be dedicated that same day at 2:00 p.m. at St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church. The marker text reads as follows:

St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church
Mother Church of Black Catholics in Georgia

In May 1874 two Benedictine priests arrived in Savannah to work with the city's African-American community, and constructed a church four blocks north of here. In 1889 a new building was constructed at this site. The Society of African Missions staffed the parish from 1907 to 1968. Staffed by Franciscan Sisters, St. Benedict's day school operated from 1907 until its closure in 1969 due to integration. The school's alumni include U. S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. The sisters also staffed the orphanage established by Mother Matilda Beasley, the first African-American woman in Georgia to belong to a religious order. The current building was constructed in 1949.

For more information please visit: www.georgiahistory.com.

About the Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. operates Wal-Mart Stores, Supercenters, Neighborhood Markets and SAM'S CLUB locations in the United States. The company also operates in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, South Korea and the United Kingdom. The company's securities are listed on the New York and NYSE Arca stock exchanges under the symbol WMT. More information about Wal-Mart can be found by visiting www.walmartfacts.com.

The Georgia Historical Society, headquartered in Savannah, is a preeminent educational and research institution and the first and only statewide historical society in Georgia. It is the oldest cultural organization in the state and one of the oldest historical societies in the nation. For nearly 175 years, GHS has collected, preserved, and shared Georgia and American history through a variety of educational outreach programs, publications, and research services.