



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATHENS HIGH AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL RECOGNIZED IN NEW HISTORICAL MARKER

Savannah, GA, August 11, 2010-- The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) along with the AHIS/BHHA Alumni Association, will unveil a new historical marker to recognize the Athens High and Industrial School. The dedication will be held across the street from the Hill Street Baptist Church at 205 N Pope Street in Athens on **August 14, 2010, at 12:00 p.m.**

Athens High and Industrial School (AHHS) began as the Reese Street School in 1914 as a facility to teach elementary aged African American children. Two years later, authorities renamed the school Athens High and Industrial when they removed the lower grades to focus primarily on high school education. Alice Barrows Fernandez of the U.S. Department of the Interior stated in 1921 that "Athens is justly proud of the fact that it has the first and only Negro high school in Georgia. Among the many educational achievements of Athens few are more significant than the development of this school. The fine spirit of the school and the progressive and thorough work being done there are things of which the city may well be proud" The marker text reads as follows:

Athens High and Industrial School

Established in 1916-1917 and accredited in 1922, Athens High and Industrial School (AHIS) was Georgia's first four-year public high school for African-American students. Originally known as Reese Street School, founded in 1914, AHIS offered a full curriculum of classes including Latin, Greek, literature, history, chemistry, and physics. Industrial classes were offered in the evenings for adults. Leading black educator Samuel F. Harris served as principal of AHIS until his death in 1935. In 1933, AHIS moved to this location, previously the site of the Knox Institute which was founded by the Freedmen's Bureau in 1868.

Erected by the Georgia Historical Society, the AHIS/BHHS Alumni Association, Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation and the Athens Historical Society, Inc.

Historical markers, which recognize people, places and events, are effective tools for economic development, connecting tourists and students of all ages to the places where history happened and encouraging local tourism and general state-wide interest. GHS has administered Georgia's historical marker program since 1998, erecting over 150 markers statewide.

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The Georgia Historical Society is an educational and research institution founded in 1839 to tell the story of Georgia and its role in American history. Headquartered in Savannah with offices in Atlanta, the Georgia Historical Society has nearly 6,000 members statewide and nearly 200 affiliates in 80 counties. It publishes the Georgia Historical Quarterly, maintains a library and archives that houses the oldest collection of Georgia history materials in the nation, manages the Historical Marker Program for the State of Georgia, and educates thousands of school children about Georgia history through the annual Georgia History Festival. For more information visit: www.georgiahistory.com.