



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Expanding Educational Opportunities, Recognizing the Contributions of Miss Georgia Washington

PIKE ROAD, Ala – As we come to the close of Black History Month, the Town of Pike Road is pleased to be joined by Pike Road Schools (PRS) and Tuskegee University in an ongoing effort to honor the legacy of Miss Georgia Washington by expanding opportunities for community education and reflection regarding Miss Washington’s contributions to public education and the Pike Road area.

In 1893, Miss Georgia Washington arrived in the Mount Meigs community, near the current Pike Road Town Hall, with the intention to start a school, particularly to serve the African-American population whose access to education was limited. With dedication, determination, and a passion for education, Miss Washington served the community first in a 12-by-13-foot cabin, then from within the walls of Antioch Baptist Church, and in 1916, the two-story Peoples Village School. Miss Washington passed in 1952, and the school currently occupying the grounds that once housed the Peoples Village School was renamed after her. Georgia Washington was laid to rest on the grounds of the school, which has since served as a public high school and middle school, and it is now home to students in the Pike Road School system.

When the Georgia Washington campus was purchased to help meet the needs of the growing Pike Road School system, the Town of Pike Road was pleased to commit to enhancing the historical site in recognition and honor of Miss Georgia Washington. With the support of the PRS Board of Education and PRS Superintendent Dr. Chuck Ledbetter, the Town embraced the responsibility of designing and implementing this meaningful endeavor. Work on the project began in late 2019; however, in the early months of 2020, the pandemic created a challenge for moving forward. Now, the Town of Pike Road is excited to have the opportunity to bring renewed energy to the project. We appreciate the patience of Pike Road Schools and the greater community as we have all adapted to the challenges of Covid-19.

“As spring approaches, we are optimistic that we can accelerate our efforts with this meaningful plan to provide greater awareness to the unique contributions of Miss Georgia Washington,” said Gordon Stone, Mayor of the Town of Pike Road. “Representing a growing school system, the Pike Road School Board has a strategy to maximize the space available on the Georgia Washington campus. The Town recognizes that an important component is the work that we will do at Miss Washington’s gravesite. With the assistance of Tuskegee University, we will work collaboratively with the school system to make this important landmark a respectful, educational destination.”

The first step of the renewed effort is a design activity coordinated with the leaders at the Robert R. Taylor School of Architecture and Construction Science at Tuskegee University. Once the design is complete, input will be gathered from community leaders, and their recommendations will be implemented to enhance the educational experience at Miss Washington’s gravesite. The gravesite is located on the campus of the Georgia Washington school.

Pike Road and River Region residents are invited to participate in recognizing and honoring the contributions of leaders in our community. In reflection and celebration, citizens are asked to share stories about local African American leaders who have made a difference. Videos or written narratives can be submitted by email to info@pikeroad.us, and contributions will be shared as part of this effort to purposefully acknowledge the life-changing work of our neighbors, past and present.

For more information or to schedule an interview, contact Turner Waddell by calling (864) 958-6577 or by emailing turner@pikeroad.us. Below, please see a community update released in the Town of Pike Road’s Feb. 26, 2021 e-newsletter.

Black History Month: Reflection, Awareness and Opportunities

The Town of Pike Road, Pike Road Schools and Tuskegee University are working together to develop a plan to recognize and further the awareness of the contributions of African American leaders to the community in which we are blessed to live. For instance, the Town has designated resources in its 2021 budget to broaden recognition of the life and legacy of Miss Georgia Washington. All three entities are committed to creating greater awareness of her extraordinary work in opening educational doors for African Americans.

“Prior to the pandemic, leaders from the Town of Pike Road, Pike Road Schools and Tuskegee University met with leaders from the Mount Meigs community to initiate the process of expanding awareness of the educational contributions of Miss Georgia Washington. During the meeting, it was determined that step one would be to develop expanded educational opportunities at the gravesite. Other ideas for exciting and innovative learning were produced, and the Tuskegee faculty and students agreed to develop a plan. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 circumstances led to a pause in the progress. Now, as we enter 2021, we are excited about renewed efforts to move forward,” said Gordon Stone, Mayor of the Town of Pike Road.

“The Robert R. Taylor School of Architecture and Construction Science (TSACS) at Tuskegee University is committed to collaborating with community leaders like Mayor Gordon Stone to integrate cultural knowledge and awareness to serve our communities. The Town of Pike Road project will help carry out our mission and the academic rigor needed to nurture a generation of highly competitive designers and builders,” said Dr. Carla Jackson Bell, Dean of TSACS.

“I appreciate the Town of Pike Road allowing Pike Road Schools to have a seat at the table in the planning of this memorial to Ms. Washington. As one of the early education pioneers in this state dedicated to educating every child, the legacy of Miss Georgia Washington is extremely important in the history of Alabama. The Pike Road Schools family is dedicated to both conserving her story and making sure that people know the contribution she made, as well as honoring her memory,” said Dr. Chuck Ledbetter, Superintendent of Pike Road Schools.

How can citizens in the Town of Pike Road assist? In reflection and acknowledgement of Black History Month, we would like to offer you the chance to share your stories about local African American leaders who have made a difference. Please consider sending us a short video message or a one-page narrative that communicates a story of an influential person in our region who is making or has made a positive impact. Stories may be submitted by email to info@pikeroad.us. We will gladly use your contributions in our effort to successfully acknowledge the life-changing work of others.

The ongoing work to recognize and support the great contributions of Miss Washington is exciting and serves as a beginning point for additional possibilities. Together, we look forward to celebrating the difference-makers of today, yesterday, and tomorrow.

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