

## **COMMUNITY PROJECT SAVES HISTORIC BLACK SCHOOL, MOVES BUILDING TO NEW HOME ON MUSEUM CAMPUS IN CHARLOTTE**

### ***1920s-era Siloam School Will Become a Center for History Education***

**CHARLOTTE, N.C., Sept. 8, 2023** – After raising \$1.2 million, today a community project moved the historic Siloam School from northeast Charlotte to the eight-acre campus of the Charlotte Museum of History, where it will become a center for history education. A local Black community in northeast Charlotte built the school in the early 1920s to give their children a quality education despite segregation.

Once fully restored, the historic school will feature exhibits about the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Black experience and the region’s history of segregation and other forms of racial injustice. The Siloam School will be the only Rosenwald-designed school in Mecklenburg County devoted to history programming.

“The Save Siloam School Project is restoring a key piece of Charlotte history, providing a space for everyone to learn about aspects of our history that are too often forgotten,” said Terri L. White, president & CEO of the Charlotte Museum of History, which leads the effort to save the school. “Like the original story of the Siloam School itself, this project is an example of what the Charlotte community can do when we come together to achieve a common goal.”

The museum plans to host a grand opening celebration in 2024, once the school is fully restored and after educational exhibits are installed.

Tribute Companies, a North Carolina-based property management and development company, owns the property on which the Siloam School originally sat, and the company donated the school building to the Charlotte Museum of History as part of the Save Siloam School project. Tribute has provided more than \$100,000 to the project by donating structural preservation and relocation services for the school.

“Tribute Companies is proud to be part of the effort to save the Siloam School and to commemorate the sacrifices past generations of Charlotteans made in order to educate their children during segregation,” said Mark Maynard Sr., president & CEO of Tribute Companies.

The Save Siloam School Project began in 2017 as an effort between the Charlotte Museum of History and the nonprofit Silver Star Community Inc., which works to save Rosenwald Schools in Mecklenburg County. Over time, the community effort grew to include many project champions and donors, including the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, The Gambrell Foundation, Mecklenburg County, Lowe's, Tribute Companies, Sandra Wilcox Conway, the City of Charlotte, Porter Durham, Bank of America, Walmart, Aldersgate and many others.

Visit [charlottemuseum.org/siloam](http://charlottemuseum.org/siloam) for more information about the project, the Siloam School's history and the important role that schools like Siloam played in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Charlotte.

### **About the Siloam School**

The Siloam School was one of thousands of Rosenwald-era schools that local communities built throughout the segregated South in the early 1900s to educate African American children. The building is on the National Register of Historic Places and was critically endangered due to disrepair prior to the project to save it.

Historical documents suggest that the Rosenwald Fund did not provide any matching funds for the construction of the Siloam School. Instead, it is likely that the local community absorbed the costs to build the school in the Rosenwald tradition, using a Rosenwald school building plan.

The Rosenwald schools program offered matching funds and architectural plans to communities that wanted to build schools for Black students in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century throughout the segregated rural South. The program produced more than 5,000 schools – 813 of them in North Carolina. By 1928, Rosenwald schools served one-third of the South's rural African American children. Mecklenburg County had 26 Rosenwald schools; only seven remain today.

The Charlotte Museum of History exists to save and share the Charlotte region's history, helping create a better understanding of the past and inspiring dialogue about the future. The museum is the steward of the oldest home in Mecklenburg County, the [1774 Hezekiah Alexander Rock House and homesite](#), as well as the [historic Siloam School](#), both of which are on the National Register of Historic Places. Visit [charlottemuseum.org](http://charlottemuseum.org) and follow the museum on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). The museum is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.