

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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El Paso County Historical Commission Announces New State Historical Markers Recognizing El Paso's Black History

El PASO, Texas – The Texas Historical Commission has approved three new historical markers for El Paso County that recognize the contributions of African Americans to El Paso's history.

Among the new markers is one that will recognize the history of Second Baptist Church and its contributions to El Paso's African American community for more than a century. The Second Baptist Church, located in downtown El Paso, was established in 1884 and is one of the oldest congregations in El Paso. Pastor Reverend Amelia C. Elmore "thanks all who have supported Second Baptist Church over the years," remarking that "believers need help from other believers to successfully persevere in difficult times, to do good works and to hang on to hope when life gets a little crazy. We hold on to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, offering the love, support, and assurance each of us need."

A second marker will commemorate the 1966 Texas Western College men's basketball team and its NCAA national championship. The final marker will tell the story of El Paso's Black suffragists and their efforts in helping to secure the right to vote for women during the women's suffrage movement. The three new markers will join several other historical markers related to El Paso's Black history, including markers honoring the Buffalo Soldiers, Henry O. Flipper, Dr. Lawrence A. Nixon, and Douglass School.

There are currently more than 140 Texas Historical Markers in the county, according to Barbara Welch, Chairperson of the County Historical Commission. These markers cover various topics of importance including the Camino Real and El Paso's Missions, the Wild West years, noteworthy buildings and historic neighborhoods, as well as significant individuals and events in the county's history. "It is vital that as we move forward, we do not forget our past," according to Welch. "These new markers will raise awareness of the vital contributions of Black El Pasoans to our community."

"The Official Texas Historical Marker program helps bring attention to community treasures and the importance of their preservation," said Mark Wolfe, executive director of the Texas Historical Commission. "Awareness and education are among the best ways to guarantee the preservation of our state's history. This designation is a tool that increases public awareness of important cultural resources," Wolfe said.

Texas has the largest marker program in the United States with approximately 15,000 markers and the Texas Historical Commission reviews more than 300 marker applications each year. A listing of all historical markers in the state and their locations can be found on the website of

the Texas Historical Commission at <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/>. The El Paso County Historical Commission invites everyone to explore the history of the county by visiting the markers.

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