

For Immediate Release  
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## ACWORTH Atlanta's Lakeside Village

### *The Acworth Rosenwald School – A Unique African-American Resource*

The Acworth Rosenwald School, circa 1924-25, was one of the over 5858 schools (242 in Georgia) built with assistance of the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Originally the school was sited on School Street, where the Roberts School Community Center is located today. Slated for demolition by the Cobb County Board of Education in 1948-49 to make way for the new Roberts School, the structure was donated to the African American community in Acworth. Dismantled by volunteers, each timber and board was numbered, the nails were straightened, and even roofing shingles salvaged, then stacked and stored on the W. Hilton Nichols property at Cherokee Street. In 1953, when Nichols deeded the property to the Acworth Colored Community, the structure was re-built for use as a community center. All the original materials were used when the school was re-assembled but the orientation was reversed, rear to front. Later, a shed addition was added to the rear for bathroom and kitchen facilities.

In February 2008, Cobb Landmarks and Historical Society, Inc., was awarded \$50,000 for the rehabilitation of the Acworth school from the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation (LCEF) Preservation Fund as part of a \$1 million initiative to preserve Rosenwald Schools across a 15-state region. The National Trust for Historic Preservation will administer the grant with Cobb Landmarks taking the lead liaison for the rehabilitation project.

Since its rebuilding in 1953, the School has been in continuous use by the African American community, hosting parties, dances, family gatherings, reunions, and holiday celebrations. The School, linked to the community for over 80 years, still serves as both social hall and an extension of the locals' homes and churches.

The Acworth Rosenwald School is one of the last of the earlier utilitarian style. Designed from a two-teacher plan, the wood clapboard structure had grouped windows into "batteries" to maximize the effect of natural light in the interior and was raised on short piers for ventilation and moisture control.



Directed toward the betterment of education for African Americans, the Rosenwald program was based as a challenge grant rather than on endowment or entitlement. Funding for the Acworth School is believed to have been one-half from the Rosenwald Fund, one-quarter Tuskegee funding and the remaining balance of funds raised within the community, both colored and white.

The Rosenwald Fund program spanned from 1915 to the 1930s with the last Rosenwald School built in Warm Springs, Georgia in 1937. The Rosenwald Fund School

projects, over the life of the program, involved some \$4.7 Million from the communities and \$4.2 million in Rosenwald monies in a program that included schools, libraries, teachers' homes, and buses.