



Paul Quinn Campus Waco, Texas

Site of Historic Black College Lives on as Community Centerpiece

Paul Quinn College Campus, a 22-acre site in the heart of a predominantly African American neighborhood in east Waco, was vacant for over 14 years. From 1881 until 1990 it was home to the historically black institution of higher learning, Paul Quinn College, and the hub of community life. In 1990 Paul Quinn College moved to Dallas when it merged with Bishop College. The loss of the college contributed immensely to the economic and social decline that followed in this area of Waco.



The campus was deeded to Quinn Campus, Inc., a non-profit with a mission to redevelop the property in the best interests of the community, continuing the legacy of higher education and community service. Five acres of the site were of concern due to fears of potential contaminants associated with a possible landfill, chemicals from labs, asbestos, and lead paint. The City of Waco provided funding for an environmental site

assessment from its EPA Brownfields Pilot Assessment Grant. The results of the assessment found no significant contamination and allowed Quinn Campus, Inc. to proceed with its redevelopment project for the site.

In this east Waco neighborhood, Elm Street is the focal point for business operations. The City of Waco and community leaders pushed for economic redevelopment along this street as a critical strategy for this neighborhood's renaissance. Since the Paul Quinn College campus borders Elm Street, Quinn Cam-



pus, Inc. was able to promote and utilize the community's vision. In partnership with the City of Waco, East Waco Neighborhood Association, East Waco Economic Development Corporation, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and private donors, the campus is well on its way to achieving its economic and social goals.

Rapoport Charter School was the first redevelopment success for this site, and, with the assistance of community fundraising, the YMCA was able to rehabilitate one of the campus buildings for its branch facility. The City of Waco funded rehabilitation of another building for the new Multi-Purpose Center on campus. These strong anchors herald a bright economic and social future for this neighborhood.