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National Groups Continue to Aid Descendants of Elaine Massacre Second Contribution Made To Support the Demand for Reparations

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Dr. Ron Daniels, Convener of the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC) announced today that two national reparatory justice groups have contributed the second of \$50,000 contribution to the Elaine Legacy Center in Elaine, Arkansas as part a pledge of \$150,000.

The contributions will (1) assist the Center in devising and implementing strategies and initiatives to bolster the demand for reparation for the Elaine Massacre in 1919; (2) begin restoration of the building on the national historic registry that is to become The Elaine Museum and Legacy Center and (3) initiate opportunities for increased incomes and wealth for the Elaine community.

In mid-December, the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC), the Fund for Reparations NOW! (FFRN) along with the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference (SDPC) announced their intent to join the descendants of the horrific Elaine Arkansas Massacre still living in the area of the 'Killing Fields of 1919' in their demand for reparations. At that time, an initial donation of 50 thousand dollars was sent to the Elaine Center.

The Elaine massacre occurred during the "Bloody Red Summer" of 1919 and resulted in the murder, incarceration and dispossession of hundreds of Black residents, many of whom were proud property owners living in a close-knit community. Some Black residents of Elaine were also lynched by White mobs in the same manner the uncle of the renowned author Richard Wright was lynched in 1917.

Property was seized and a community was decimated, but the outcry for reparations by the descendants, which has been demanded for generations, hitherto has largely fallen on deaf ears. But the descendants have never given up the righteous struggle for justice. Through the work of the Elaine Legacy Center (ELC), descendants have begun to draw more attention to their cause.

"The loss of life, land, and future inheritance during a massacre has been a universal experience. However, the massacre that took place on Elaine soil was the largest racial massacre in U.S. history," said Lenora Jackson Marshall, vice president of the board of the Elaine Legacy Center.

“It is now a century later and people are still living in fear: apprehensive about discussing the Massacre because history has a way of repeating itself. Our land needs to be healed.

There is a desperate need for our community to be healed. The Killing Fields are vast reminders of lives lost. Land markers where people were buried in massive graves and even hung are sacred grounds.”

“We remain totally committed to the process of implementing reparatory justice in Elaine, AK as it unfolds as a model for this nation,” said Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference. “This continued support from FFRN and our collective engagement in the reparations movement in Elaine gives the descendants greater long-term capacity to redress the harms of the past.”

Commenting on the delivery of the second 50K commitment, Alex Freedman, a member of the board of the Fund for Reparations NOW! said, “We at FFRN are so excited to cross another milestone toward our goal of \$150,000 in support of the Elaine Legacy Center’s work. The Elaine Massacre of 1919 is the single most deadly incident of anti-Black racial violence in Arkansas, and perhaps US history, but it remains unknown to most Americans today. If the events of the last year show us anything, it’s that we need to have a serious conversation about these dark chapters of American history, how their impacts reverberate forward to the present, and how we can take steps to heal harm done.”

“We, descendants of the Elaine Massacre, are working to change the mentality as well as create a new and different place to live,” added Ms. Marshall. “We are seeking equity for all people. We have no control over the past but we can work to build a brighter future. We are moving from poverty to prosperity by following our goals.”

She expressed appreciation to NAARC, FFRN and SDPC for “undergirding our efforts to create equity for all. With their support, the impossible is being made possible. The Elaine Legacy Center and the descendants are eternally grateful for the assistance.”

The Center is a recognized nonprofit with 501c3 status. Tax deductible donations can be made via the ELC’s Website (<http://www.elainelegacycenter.org>) or via check made payable to the Elaine Legacy Center, Inc. and mailed to P.O. Box 42, Elaine, AR 72333

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