

Toyota's \$10,000 Donation May Give the Ultimate Beauty Maven a Stylish Updo

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BOSTON, Aug. 3, 2014 – Imagine it’s the early 1900s; ladies are headed to the salon to get coiffed and primed. Thanks to Madame C. J. Walker, America’s first self-made female millionaire, plenty of hair and cosmetic products are available. Yet today, the estate of this legendary businesswoman, Villa Lewaro, needs legal protection to avoid demolition.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has sounded the alarm at more than 250 threatened historic sites through its annual 11 Most Endangered Historic Places list, and currently identifies 47 historic sites in its portfolio of National Treasures where the Trust is taking direct action to protect these places across the country that stand at risk. Many of these significant places represent rich African American history, including Atlanta’s Sweet Auburn District, the Malcolm X-Ella Little Collins House in Boston and Philadelphia’s Joe Frazier’s Gym. Recognizing how essential these sites are to America and the education of future generations, Toyota Motor Sales’ (TMS) Jim Colon decided to join the preservation party.

To help safeguard these iconic American landmarks, Toyota has donated \$10,000 to The National Trust for Historic Preservation. A symbolic check was presented to the National Trust executives at the 2014 National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) Convention & Career Fair in Boston during an apropos workshop – “Telling our Story: Keeping the History of African American Historic Places Alive and in the Spotlight.” The session, presented by the National Trust and sponsored by Toyota, encouraged journalists to report on endangered African American historic sites as part of the effort to save them.

“We applaud the National Trust for Historic Preservation for taking on the critical role of protecting vital African American historic sites for the enjoyment and benefit of all people interested in the history,” said Colon, TMS vice president of African American Business Strategy. “As a part of its commitment to education, Toyota is committed to sustaining our distinctive American treasures. They give us rare glimpses of our past that will help influence our future. The significant work undertaken by the National Trust will ensure the survival of renowned landmarks for generations to come.”

The donation to the National Trust for Historic Preservation follows Toyota’s contribution to the National Archives to preserve important documents, including the GI Bill of Rights and House Passage of the Bill of Rights.

“We are honored to accept Toyota’s generous gift to support our work saving the places that tell America’s diverse stories,” said Marita Rivero, chairman-elect, National Trust for Historic Preservation. “Toyota’s slogan, ‘Let’s Go Places,’ appropriately describes what we encourage Americans across this great country to do — visit, enjoy and discover our history. By preserving and celebrating the places that reflect the many layers of our collective history together, we build a more perfect union.”

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a privately funded nonprofit organization and is the nation’s leading voice for saving America’s historic places. They promote saving places by taking direct action at a growing portfolio of irreplaceable, threatened places of national significance.