



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Georgia Historical Society Names  
Citizens Trust Bank Newest Honoree in Georgia Business History Initiative,  
Dedicates New Historical Marker**



*Councilman Michael Julian Bond. Post 1; Alicia V. J. Wilson, Board of Director, Citizens Bancshares Corporation; Ray M. Robinson, Chairman, Citizens Bancshares Corporation; Dr. W. Todd Groce; Cynthia N. Day; Mayor Andre Dickens; Councilwoman Andrea L. Boone, District 10; Councilman Jason Dozier, District 4 (l-r).*

**Atlanta, GA, February 6, 2025**—On Wednesday, February 5, 2025, the [Georgia Historical Society \(GHS\)](#) unveiled a new historical marker in Atlanta as part of the [Business History Initiative](#). Dedicated in partnership with the Citizens Trust Bank, the marker details how the bank has become one of the United States' largest African-American-owned financial institutions since its opening in 1921.

“Citizens Trust Bank is an icon of African-American banking and entrepreneurship, not only in Georgia, but the entire Southeast,” said GHS President and CEO Dr. W. Todd Groce. “From its earliest days to the present, Citizens Trust Bank has provided invaluable financial services and promoted economic empowerment for Atlanta’s Black community. The Georgia Historical Society is honored to tell the story of this historic institution and its impact on the people of this state.”

Over a century ago, Citizens Trust Bank was founded on Atlanta’s historic Auburn Avenue, the heart of African-American commercial, cultural, and spiritual life before the Civil Rights Movement. Surrounded by thriving Black-owned businesses—including Atlanta Life Insurance Company and Standard Life—it quickly became a financial hub for businesses, families, and individuals. Beyond fostering business growth, Citizens Trust Bank played a crucial role in developing neighborhoods and providing access to capital for those seeking homeownership, even in historically segregated communities. Despite its expansion and nationwide impact, the bank remains headquartered in Atlanta and has stayed true to its mission of economic equality and financial empowerment.

“Citizens Trust Bank is honored to receive this historical marker recognition from the Georgia Historical Society,” said Citizens Trust Bank President and CEO Cynthia N. Day. “The acknowledgement not only celebrates a century-long commitment to empowering communities and fostering economic opportunity but also serves as a testament to the resilience and progress of those we serve. We are proud to be a part of Georgia’s rich history and remain steadfast in our mission to build a brighter future for generations to come.”

The marker dedication took place at Citizens Trust Bank’s Westside Branch, its first branch location, on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Atlanta. Speakers included Reverend Kenneth Alexander, Jr., Pastor, Antioch Baptist Church; Dr. W. Todd

Groce, President and CEO, Georgia Historical Society; The Honorable Andre Dickens, Mayor, City of Atlanta; and Cynthia N. Day, President and CEO, Citizens Trust Bank.





## Citizens Trust Bank

On August 16, 1921, businessmen Heman E. Perry, James A. Robinson, Thomas J. Ferguson, W.H. King, and Henry Dugas (known as the "Fervent Five"), opened the African-American-owned and -operated Citizens Trust Bank on Auburn Avenue to serve Black Atlantans. The bank played a key role in the community, promoting business growth while facilitating homeownership for a larger number of African Americans. In 1934 the bank was the first African-American-owned bank to gain Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation membership, and in 1947 it became the first African-American-owned bank to join the Federal Reserve System. In 1955, Citizens Trust Bank opened its first branch location at this site. Today, Citizens Trust Bank is one of the United States' largest African-American-owned financial institutions and remains headquartered in Atlanta while serving communities across the country.

2025.2 Erected by the Georgia Historical Society and Citizens Trust Bank 60-41

The marker text reads:

***Citizens Trust Bank***

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*Erected by the Georgia Historical Society and Citizens Trust Bank*

For more information about the Citizens Trust Bank historical marker dedication, the Georgia Historical Society marker program, or the Georgia Business History Initiative, please contact Elyse Butler, Manager of Programs and Special Projects, at 912.651.2125, ext. 119, or by email at [ebutler@georgiahistory.com](mailto:ebutler@georgiahistory.com).

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**ABOUT THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*The Georgia Historical Society (GHS) is the premier independent statewide institution responsible for collecting, examining, and teaching Georgia and American history. GHS houses the oldest and most distinguished collection of materials related exclusively to Georgia history in the nation.*

*To learn more visit [georgiahistory.com](http://georgiahistory.com).*

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## **ABOUT THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL MARKER PROGRAM**

*The Georgia Historical Marker Program is an important part of the Georgia Historical Society's (GHS) statewide educational mission. Through a public-private partnership with the State of Georgia, GHS is responsible for erecting new historical markers and maintaining more than 2,000 markers installed by the State prior to the program's privatization in 1998. Online mapping tools allow users to explore themed marker trails and design custom driving routes.*

*Visit [georgiahistory.com](http://georgiahistory.com) for more ways to use Georgia's historical markers and experience history where it happened.*


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## **ABOUT CITIZENS TRUST BANK**

*Ranked 28th by S&P Global among the top 100 best-performing US Community Banks under \$3B\*, Citizens Trust Bank celebrates over a century serving its community. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, Citizens Trust Bank continues to prioritize offering customized services and financial solutions to address the community's evolving needs, going beyond traditional banking with a legacy built on economic equality and well-being. Today, Citizens Trust Bank continues to be led by its founding mission to empower customers and future generations for financial success and takes pride in offering financial solutions across the country. Through its parent company, Citizens Bancshares Corporation, the Bank offers its common stock over the counter to the public under the trading symbol CZBS and can be found at [www.ctbconnect.com](http://www.ctbconnect.com), and in the social media communities of [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and Citizens Trust Bank Learning Channel on [YouTube](#).*

*\*Based on financials for the year ending December 2023.*

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