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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Africatown's ACDC Winner of $50,000 Healthy Food Financing Grant from ADECA

April 5, 2018, Mobile, AL—The wins just keep coming this spring for the Africatown Community Development Corporation (ACDC) on behalf of the historic Africatown neighborhood. Yesterday, the organization was in Montgomery to receive $50,000 from Governor Kay Ivey made possible by the Alabama Healthy Food Financing Act. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs is administering the grant that provides $50,000 for an open-air market with multiple rental booths for vendors and to sell produce from the highly successful Africatown Community Garden that has been developed, in part, with support from the Alabama Department of Agriculture, other public and private partners.

The ACDC was one of seven recipients around the state to be awarded grants to help businesses and non-profits provide more and healthier food options in communities with limited access to foods. "Food deserts" are defined as urban areas where at least 33% of the population lives a mile or more from an offering of fresh produce at affordable prices (or rural areas that are 10 or more miles from such offerings). According to the Governor and health experts, such access will help children develop properly, allow senior citizens to stay healthy and reduce long-term health care costs. For the Africatown Community, the grant also helps them sustain their community garden by selling excess produce.

The award comes on the heels of renewed interest by the Alabama Historical Commission last month to find the remains of the CLOTILDA, the last slave ship that entered US waters, carrying the ancestors of many Africatown residents. Also in March, the ACDC received a unanimous vote by the Gulf Coast Recovery Council to award the organization more than $3 million in RESTORE Act funds for their

proposal to develop and construct an Africatown Visitor and Heritage Center in the community.

Over the past several years, the ACDC has spearheaded a number of activities to revive the neighborhood and begin to restore it to the community it once was. The organization has held numerous cleanup events, has worked with the City of Mobile to raze blighted and abandoned properties, and with the State Agriculture Department and local private and non-profit partners to develop the successful community garden. In July 2017, the ACDC sponsored the inaugural Africatown Bridge Challenge that attracted almost 600 walkers and runners, many who for the first time visited the historic Africatown cemetery and neighborhood, and a mural depicting the arrival of the CLOTILDA to the Mobile area.

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The Africatown Community Development Corporation (ACDC) was incorporated in 2013 as a domestic, non-profit, 501c3 corporation to preserve and protect Mobile's African-American Heritage. The ACDC's efforts have been largely focused on reducing blight and beautifying the historic neighborhood, encouraging former residents to return home to live, and increasing the rolls and quality of education at the historic Mobile County Training School, the second oldest school in Alabama and the training grounds for many professional athletes. In January 2016 the City of Mobile released Africatown Neighborhood Plan, a model for improving the historic community. ACDC was engaged with the development of this plan and also in coordinating its efforts with neighboring businesses and industries along its border.

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