



If You Can Dream It, You Can Achieve It at an HBCU or PBI!

Talking Points RE: Talladega Participation in Inauguration 2017

- 🍏 The decision of whether Talladega should participate in the 2017 Inauguration is a decision that is rightly that of the President after weighing the best interests of his students and the Talladega Family.
- 🍏 President Hawkins weighed a range of considerations then concluded that Talladega's participation in the 2017 Inauguration Day activities would create unique and enriching education opportunities for the students in the band and also could serve as a tremendous marketing opportunity for the College— an opportunity to bring global attention to Talladega and its value proposition, as well as to the 105 other richly diverse US colleges and universities that are part of a community of American colleges named by Congress as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).
- 🍏 I am acutely aware that there are many who believe that those who do not agree with the views of President Elect Trump, and those who found abhorrent his campaign rhetoric that was laced with bigoted and misogynistic references, should not participate in Inauguration Day, 2017. I understand that viewpoint, to be sure.
- 🍏 As an American higher education leader, and the CEO of Talladega College, it appears to me, however, that President Hawkins is uniquely situated to use the opportunity Talladega College has to engage some of its students centrally in the transition of power at the highest level in the United States, to educate the Talladega Community and others about the significance of Inauguration Day and how Inauguration Day, as outlined in the United States Constitution, is not a day to endorse the President Elect or his or her views, but rather a day to put on display for the world to see, the most awesome example of the importance and effectiveness of Democracy at its best, and the manner in which the United States of America has perfected the transference of power and the avoidance of a power vacuum between Administrations---even in such cases as this one in which the electoral system, itself, arguably failed the citizens of the United States in that the winner of the popular vote will not become the President of the United States. [This challenging aspect of the Electoral College has been evidenced in years past as well as in this election, and continues to be grappled with.]
- 🍏 The 20th Amendment to the United States Constitution outlines the activities and participants required to ensure a smooth transition from one Administration to the next. Regardless of the tenor and tone of the election process, regardless of whether those participating in this great day in America voted for a President Elect; those whose candidates were victorious and those whose candidates were not, Democrats and Republicans come together to celebrate another successful Democratic transference of power in America, and to pledge allegiance to the United States and its Egalitarian Ideal.
- 🍏 For many, and certainly for me, among the most remarkable aspects of this great nation is its Freedoms outlined in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Religion, Freedom to Assemble and Petition our government. All of these Freedoms are exercised and on display in the Nation's Capitol on Inauguration Day. This year will be no different. The separate powers of our tripartite government

will also be on display. The three branches of government, that generally exercise their separate and independent powers, will work as one on Inauguration Day, with the executive, judiciary and legislative branches each playing a crucial role in the smooth transition of power. Shortly after the President of the United States takes his oath, they will return to their respective chambers and begin their business, anew. As the three branches of government are engaged in their Constitutionally prescribed activities, people of all stripes, positions and persuasions will be exercising their Constitutionally protected rights to assemble, petition the government, and express their diverse and divergent viewpoints, just down the Hill from the Capitol on the Washington Mall. Members of the press from around the globe will also be there, listening, recording, interviewing and preparing to express themselves through publication and dissemination of information, ideas and opinions, without interference, constraint or prosecution by the government.

- 🍏 When the Talladega students are here, the College will optimize opportunities for press coverage about Talladega, its magnificent students, its outstanding music program, its Woodruff murals linking Talladega and its history to significant events in the journey of African Americans from slavery to freedom in America. Talladega will introduce a broader swath of America and others globally to the esteemed and highly accomplished members of the Board of Trustees of Talladega—leaders from the highest levels of corporate America, business, investment, banking, education and other arenas. Talladega will use the occasion to highlight the success stories of some blacks in America who graduated from HBCUs, as well as the caliber and diversity of persons from all backgrounds and walks of life, committed to using their time, talent and treasure to govern Talladega and others of our HBCUs today, because of their value proposition and their centrality to the realization of important American goals.
- 🍏 As a Constitutional Justice lawyer, an advocate for all HBCUs and PBIs and their stakeholders, a champion for all students, especially those of least advantage, and the leader of a national association, I understand the decision of Talladega President, Billy Hawkins. In matters such as these when leaders must make tough decisions, after they have weighed the pros and cons, sought and carefully considered the opinions of those whose wise counsel they respect, then good leaders make the tough decisions and have the courage of their convictions. President Hawkins made an unpopular decision in the best interest of his students and Talladega College aligned with his convictions. For this he must be commended.

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