



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Talladega College President Dr. Billy Hawkins Named The First African American Board Chairman for AAICU.**

Dr. Billy C. Hawkins, President of Talladega College, was selected as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Alabama Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (AAICU) during their Annual Meeting on 16 June 2016. He replaces Dr. Rev. Cam West, President of Huntingdon College. Dr. Hawkins served as the Vice Chairman for the past two years. Dr. Hawkins is the first African American to be appointed to this prestigious position.

AAICU History:

In 1956, a group of independent college presidents founded the Alabama Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to benefit students and member institutions through various fundraising activities. Its sister organization, The Council for Advancement of Private Colleges in Alabama was established in 1969 to focus on public policy issues on behalf of independent colleges in the Alabama. The administrative staffs of the two associations were consolidated under one chief executive officer in 1987 but remained separate entities until July 2006, when both organizations merged into a single association under the AAICU name.

The primary purpose of AAICU is to provide a forum for Alabama's nonprofit colleges and universities to work collaboratively on policies, programs, fund raising and business interests as a unified sector. The strength of our members lies as a community working together.

As such, AAICU is:

- The only and leading advocate and public policy resource for regionally accredited, private, nonprofit institutions in state and federal policy making circles
- The primary and leading advocate on the Alabama Student Grant Program, Federal State Authorization compliance and other sensitive policy/regulatory issues
- The respected resource for members on state political news and analysis of events in the Statehouse
- The resource for members and state elected officials on higher education policy
- A resource to assist members on ways to strategically engage and connect with their elected officials, both on-campus and in Montgomery
- The sector representative educating legislators and the public at large about the important role private, nonprofit colleges and universities have in the state through public testimony, meetings, and printed material
- The sector representative to build relationships with key organizations in and around the arena of higher education in support of our mission and students

Talladega College is the first college in Alabama to admit students of African American descent. Founded in 1867 by two former slaves, William Savery and Thomas Tarrant. Also, the home of the Famous Amistad Murals painted by Hale A. Woodruff. The College has an aggressive tradition of bringing the world to Talladega and offers 18 majors that provide students with an education that prepares them for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce. For more information, visit [www.talladega.edu](http://www.talladega.edu).