



For Immediate Release
Contact: Mary Sood
Director of Public Relations
msood@talladega.edu
256-761-6201

**Business Pioneer William F. Pickard, Ph.D.
to Deliver Talladega College Commencement Address**



Talladega, AL. - Talladega College announced today that business pioneer Dr. William F. Pickard will speak at its 143rd commencement ceremony on Sunday, May 6, 2018.

A prominent business leader, best-selling author and esteemed philanthropist, Dr. Pickard serves as chairman of Global Automotive Alliance (GAA), which has generated over \$5 billion dollars in sales. He is also co-managing partner of MGM Grand Detroit Casino; CEO of Bearwood Management Company; and co-owner of five black-owned newspapers. He began his forty-five-year entrepreneurial career as a McDonald's franchisee in Detroit, Michigan.

Dr. Pickard has served on numerous business and non-profit boards including Asset Acceptance Capital Corporation, Michigan National Bank, LaSalle Bank, Business Leaders for Michigan, National Urban League, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Detroit Black Chamber of Commerce. He is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan appointed him as the first chairman of the African Development Foundation. Under President George Bush, he was appointed to the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations in 1990, and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board-Indianapolis Bank in Indiana in 1991. Dr. Pickard is a past recipient of the prestigious Michiganian of the Year award.

He has donated over one million dollars to the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. and over three million to Western Michigan University. The William F. Pickard Living Center at Grand Valley State University and the Hall-Archer-Pickard East and Hall-Archer-Pickard West residence hall complex at Western Michigan University are named in his honor.

A true Renaissance man, he is also author of the best-seller *Millionaire Moves – Seven Proven Principles of Entrepreneurship*. He holds a bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University, a master's degree from the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. from The Ohio State University.

Talladega College President Dr. Billy C. Hawkins stated, "Dr. Pickard embodies the spirit of excellence that Talladega has sought to instill in students for over 150 years. He has been recognized nationally and internationally for his exemplary accomplishments in business as well as his commitment to service and philanthropy. We are so pleased that our 2018 graduates will have an opportunity to be inspired by such an outstanding leader."

About Talladega College

The oldest private Historically Black College in Alabama, Talladega College was founded in 1867 by two former slaves, William Savery and Thomas Tarrant. Talladega College is the home of the renowned Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals, which received rave reviews from *The New York Times* and others during a three-year, eight-museum tour. For more information, visit www.talladega.edu.