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Contact:  
Talladega College Office of Public Relations  
256-761-8832  
publicrelations@talladega.edu

## TALLADEGA COLLEGE TO HOST HISTORIC TREE-PLANTING CEREMONY

**Talladega, Alabama** – Talladega College is hosting a tree-planting ceremony to celebrate its sesquicentennial, which is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The historical event will be held on campus on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> immediately following the Opening Convocation.

Talladega College is part of the HBCU-9 United Sesquicentennial Celebration. Nine Historically Black Colleges and Universities—located in four southern states of Alabama, Georgia, Maryland and North Carolina and in the District of Columbia—were also founded in 1867 including Alabama State University, Barber-Scotia College, Fayetteville State University, Howard University, Johnson C. Smith University, Morehouse College, Morgan State University, and St. Augustine’s University. Talladega College President Dr. Billy C. Hawkins said he is proud to be part this historic celebration.

“This tree-planting ceremony symbolizes not only Talladega’s past, but its future,” Hawkins said. “This is a celebration that will unite our history with that of other institutions. Historically Black Colleges like Talladega and the others represented have presented excellence for 150 years. This tree will help us to carry on that legacy.”

Throughout 2017, all of them will celebrate their sesquicentennial on their campuses; and they decided over a year ago, and have been working for the last year, on a joint one-week celebration—September 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017—in which they will focus collectively on the enduring legacy and achievements of their institutions and their contributions, as well as on those of other HBCUs, to the making of this nation.

With this unified and collaborative observance, they hope to focus the nation’s attention sharply and effectively on the remarkable record of HBCUs, both historically and presently, and their tremendous value as some of the nation’s hidden treasures. In addition, they wish to generate a national conversation on the critical role that HBCUs must play in 21<sup>st</sup>-century American education and what the nation must do, in its own best interest, to preserve and enhance them.

### **About Talladega College**

Talladega College’s history began on November 20, 1865 when William Savery and Thomas Tarrant, former slaves from Talladega, met in convention with a group of new freedmen in Mobile, Alabama. Savery and Tarrant, aided by General Wager Swayne of the Freedmen’s Bureau, pledged to provide a school for former slaves’ children. Lumber salvaged from an abandoned carpenter’s shop resulted in the construction of a one-room schoolhouse. The school was overcrowded with pupils. The American Missionary Association later purchased the building and 20 acres of land for \$23,000. It opened in 1867 with about 140 pupils. The school was chartered Talladega College in 1869. For more information, visit [www.talladega.edu](http://www.talladega.edu).