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TALLADEGA COLLEGE WILL PARTICIPATE IN 58TH PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL PARADE

TALLADEGA, Ala.- January 5, 2017 — Talladega College President Billy Hawkins confirms the Marching Tornados will participate in the 58th Presidential Inaugural Parade.

The lessons students can learn from this experience cannot be taught in a classroom, as Talladega student Dollan Young acknowledges in a [petition](#) he started in support of the band's inaugural parade performance. Talladega alumnus and Hampton University President William R. Harvey echoed these sentiments in a letter of support to Hawkins.

"It will be a wonderful learning experience for the students in the band. It will be a teachable moment for them to understand the importance of supporting the leader of the free world, despite one's political viewpoint," said Harvey. "After all, the reason for being of any college or university should be to promote learning and not to enhance a political agenda."

The College's decision to participate in the parade has been met with both praise and condemnation. The administration did not rush to accept the invitation to participate, because they wanted to hear and consider the thoughts and feelings of the Talladega College community.

"We respect and appreciate how our students and alumni feel about our participation in this parade," said Hawkins. "As many of those who chose to participate in the parade have said, we feel the inauguration of a new president is not a political event but a civil ceremony celebrating the transfer of power."

Like Hawkins, Harvey recognizes the value of participating in this historic event. "In my view, it is an honor to be invited to the inauguration of any President of the United States. The college and its band are celebrating the peaceful transition of power—a hallmark of America's democracy and swearing in of a new President," said Harvey.

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About Talladega College

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, Talladega College is 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 21st Century workforce. For more information, visit www.talladega.edu.