

White House Executive Johnathan M. Holifield, J.D.
to Speak at Talladega College Opening Convocation



Talladega, AL (September 7, 2018) - Talladega College announced that Mr. Johnathan M. Holifield, J.D., executive director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), will deliver the keynote address during Opening Convocation, Thursday, September 20, at 10 a.m. in DeForest Chapel. The former NFL player and esteemed champion of educational inclusion and economic development was appointed by President Donald Trump on October 2, 2017.

Mr. Holifield oversees federal efforts, set forth in Executive Order 13779, to “advance America's full human potential; foster more and better opportunities in higher education; [and] strengthen the capacity of HBCUs to provide the highest-quality education.” The initiative provides equitable opportunities for participation in federal programs and monitors implementation of the executive order.

In 2010, he co-founded ScaleUp Partners, a consultancy committed to connecting underrepresented populations and disaffected communities with innovation development leaders and stakeholders. Mr. Holifield is the author of *The Future Economy and Inclusive Competitiveness: How Demographic Trends and Innovation Can Create Economic Prosperity for All Americans*, which describes the dramatic economic impact that shifting demographic trends will have on America’s economic future, and the pitfalls and opportunities that could accompany the shifts.

He was founding vice president of inclusive competitiveness at NorTech (Northeast Ohio Technology Coalition), an organization dedicated to enhancing the region’s prosperity through science, technology and innovation. He also authored the 2014 Ohio Department of Higher Education’s statewide report, *Inclusive Competitiveness: Empowering Underrepresented Ohioans to Compete in the Innovation Economy*, and he was a member of the Northeast Ohio Council of Regional Economic Policy Advisors. Additionally, he served in leadership positions at the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, at CincyTech (a market-leading venture development organization), the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and the Cleveland Urban League.

Mr. Holifield led the formation of a market-leading regional innovation leadership organization in Ohio, attracting support from Fortune 500 CEOs, university presidents and elected officials; raised over \$40 million, which was leveraged to create networks of more than \$250 million of early-stage risk capital and increased investment options for entrepreneurs; created Ohio’s first information technology public school, which became a U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School; and secured a \$5 million appropriation to implement Ohio’s first STEM education and entrepreneurship program. Additionally, he executed partnerships to host the nation’s first summit on “angel” investing, higher growth entrepreneurship, STEM education and policy making in urban communities.

He earned his Bachelor of Arts from West Virginia University, where he was also elected football team captain. He later played for the Cincinnati Bengals in the National Football League. Mr. Holifield received his Juris Doctor and Master of Education from the University of Cincinnati, and a professional certificate from the University of Oklahoma’s Economic Development Institute.