William R. Harvey makes the largest gift in Talladega College history to provide a new home for the Acclaimed Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals

In recognition for William and Norma Harvey gift, a new art museum will be established and named the William R. Harvey Art Museum at Talladega College.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Talladega, AL—Talladega College President, Billy C. Hawkins has announced Talladega alumnus, and Hampton University President, William Harvey, and his wife Norma Harvey, have made a gift of over $1 million to establish the William R. Harvey Art Museum at Talladega College. The Harvey Art Museum will be the new home of the acclaimed Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals and kicks off the Rise Up! Ring True Campaign: A New Home for the Amistad Murals.

“Bill Harvey is a respected alumnus, educator, and businessman. We are grateful to the Harvey’s for their generosity,” said President Hawkins. “I could not think of a more appropriate person’s name to grace the new home for the Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals.”

Dr. William Harvey is President of Hampton University and 100% owner of the Pepsi Cola Bottling Company of Houghton, Michigan. Since 1978, Dr. Harvey has transformed Hampton University into a world-class leader in the field of higher education, taking the endowment from $29 million to over $260 million. Dr. Harvey’s 36 years at Hampton University has given him one of the longest tenures of any sitting president of a college or university in the country. Born in Brewton, Alabama, Dr. Harvey graduated from Talladega College in 1961. Dr. Harvey has been appointed by six Presidents to White House committees and serves on numerous corporate and philanthropic boards.

Well known for philanthropy, Dr. Harvey’s generosity to Hampton University has exceeded over $2.5 million in the last 13 years, which have established innovative programs and provided faculty and staff wage increases. “Philanthropy gives me an opportunity to give hope and provide support for future generations,” said Dr. Harvey. In 1994, Dr. Harvey was the first African American to chair the Virginia Peninsula United Way Campaign, raising a record setting $6.6 million. The Harvey’s have made numerous gifts to organizations throughout the nation and the Hampton Roads region.

"Talladega College is indeed fortunate to have such accomplished and altruistic alumni, like Dr. William Harvey," said Harry Coaxum '75, chairman of the Board of Trustees. "Dr. Harvey's transformational gift demonstrates his commitment to and confidence in Talladega College. Our ultimate vision was for a stand-alone art museum to house and showcase the Amistad Murals. The gift has made our vision possible. We will forever be grateful to Dr. Harvey."

Dr. Harvey’s passion for African American art began at Talladega College in Dr. David Driskell’s classroom, who is a well-recognized art historian and artist. “My professors at Talladega College gave more than instruction—they taught us about life. Dr. Driskell cultivated my appreciation and advocacy for
African American art. I am so proud to take my Talladega College experience and establish Hampton University’s museum collection to one of the largest African and Native American collections in the nation and now name the new home for the Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals.

“The College is ready to embark on a new history for the Amistad Murals, telling the story of determination, resiliency, and the new African American experience,” explained President Hawkins. “Talladega College has a history of cultivating promising artists. Hale Woodruff was a young, talented artist when he created his greatest work of art—the Amistad Murals. It is only fitting Talladega College continues to cultivate and bring opportunity to the next Hale Woodruff or David Driskell.”

In 2011, Talladega College partnered with the High Museum in Atlanta, Georgia to restore the $40 million Amistad Murals. After 70 years, the murals were removed from the lobby of Talladega College’s Savery Library to bring back to life the aging works of art in preparation for a national tour. Now in the second year of the Rising Up!: Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals at Talladega College national tour, the Amistad Murals have brought incredible accolades from around the country including the New York Times. In response to the NYU exhibition, Roberta Smith, New York Times arts editor wrote, “There is nothing in American art quite like the elegant, urgent, boldly colored murals that Hale Woodruff painted.”

Answering the call to establish a new home for the Amistad Murals, Dr. Harvey’s gift is the lead gift in the Rise Up! Ring True Campaign. The campaign’s central focus is to provide a new home for the Amistad Murals and create a space for African American creative scholarship, and give students the opportunity to actively engage in their creative passion. The $5 million campaign will primarily fund the little over $3 million William R. Harvey Art Museum at Talladega College, an estimated 9,000 square foot facility at the gateway of the campus. The facility, which is still in development, will consist of three art galleries, a multi-purpose creative space, and ample outdoor space with an Amphitheatre, and courtyard.

“The national tour has raised the visibility of the Amistad Murals and the genius of Hale Woodruff. From the High Museum in Atlanta to Chicago’s Cultural Center to NYU, the murals’ relevance was greater than we could have imagined,” explains Tysus Jackson, vice president for Intuitional Advancement. “The campaign will be an opportunity to expand Talladega Colleges’ legacy of creative scholarship and engagement.”

Marked as one of the “40 Things We Love about Alabama” by Southern Living, the Talladega College Amistad Murals has long been a hidden treasure in Alabama. The Rise Up! Ring True Campaign is a $5 million call to action to keep the murals in the forefront of American art after the national tour.

“Talladega College taught every student the greatness of the African American experience through the Amistad Murals. We knew we stood on the shoulders of Cinqué, William Savery, Thomas Tarrant, and other fearless giants,” said Dr. Harvey. “Talladega College challenged us for greatness. I hope my gift continues the greatness that the college imparted on to me.”

The Rise Up! Ring True Campaign details will be released in the upcoming weeks.
For more information about the Rise Up! Ring True Campaign or the Amistad Murals; contact Tysus Jackson, Vice President for Institutional Advancement at tdjackson@talladega.edu or 256-761-8832.

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. The College has an aggressive tradition of bringing the world to Talladega. Home of the Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals, the murals are on a nationwide tour where it is estimated to be seen by over a half million people and has received rave reviews from the *New York Times*. For more information, visit [www.talladega.edu](http://www.talladega.edu).

About the Rise Up National Tour

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