



COMMUNIQUÉ

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DR. CLAUDE PERKINS TO DELIVER 65TH COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT MVSU

Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) will host its 65th Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, May 6 at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. in the R. W. Harrison Complex on the Itta Bena campus.

The commencement address will be delivered by MVSU Alum Dr. Claude Perkins, who is currently on sabbatical as the 12th president of Virginia Union University (VUU).

MVSU's seventh president, Dr. William B. Bynum, will hand diplomas to 450 undergraduate and graduate students.

During the 8 a.m. ceremony, degrees will be conferred to golden graduates, all masters students regardless of major, and undergraduates in the departments of English and foreign languages, fine arts, general studies, mathematics, computer and information sciences, natural sciences and environmental health and social sciences.

At 11 a.m. graduates in business administration, criminal justice, engineering technology, mass communications, social work, education and health, physical education and recreation will be awarded degrees.

"Dr. Perkins has truly lived the University's motto, 'Live for Service' throughout his storied career in education," said Bynum. "He has consistently given generously of his time and treasures to MVSU. We are very grateful for Dr. Perkins and his commitment to his alma mater."

Perkins graduated from MVSU in 1964 with a degree in political science. Since his appointment as chief executive officer in January of 2009, VUU has undergone a major transformation. Perkins' achievements include increases in enrollment, scholarships, retention, and the university's net assets. He has substantially stabilized the financial position of the university and continues to grow the endowment for long term financial viability. Toward that end, in June of 2015, VUU exceeded its comprehensive campaign goal of \$30 million.



Perkins was the first African American to serve as superintendent of schools in Clark County, Nevada, which includes Las Vegas, the 5th largest in the nation. The Clark County - Nevada School Board honored him for his work with the naming of the \$25 million Claude Grandford Perkins Elementary School. He also served as superintendent of schools in Kansas City, Missouri and deputy and assistant superintendent of schools for

the City of Richmond, Virginia. In addition, Perkins was appointed by the Governor of the State of Nevada to serve as the state director (secretary) of commerce in 1982 with oversight responsibility of billions of dollars in state assets.

"We are excited that graduates will be able to hear from an alumnus who has set the bar high in his field," said Bynum.

NISSAN RENEWS COMMITMENT TO MISSISSIPPI HBCUS

Press release on behalf of Nissan

Nissan is again donating \$250,000 to seven local historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) initiatives at each school to inspire and develop talent.

To date, Nissan has invested more than \$1 million in local HBCUs – more than half of which supports STEM-specific curriculums. At Nissan's Canton Assembly Plant, Nissan executives presented the donations to representatives from Alcorn State University, Coahoma Community College, Hinds Community College – Utica Campus, Jackson State University, Mississippi Valley State University, Rust College and Tougaloo College. 'Nissan recognizes that STEM education is critical to developing the next generation of innovators. We are proud to continue our commitment to Mississippi's HBCUs with another \$250,000 grant this year,' said Jeffrey Webster, director of Diversity and Inclusion, Nissan North America, Inc.

Resources provided to each institution will be used to promote a range of STEM-related programs and departments, including applied sciences, engineering, math, computer and information science and many more.

The donation of \$250,000 builds on the success of Nissan Canton's ongoing partnership with



HBCU Presidents and other leaders receive a \$250,000 donation.

the HBCUs.

- With its 2016 HBCU donation, Coahoma Community College offered a camp for 38 students, ages 8-11, to promote an interest in STEM fields. Coahoma also used funds to purchase a portable Program Logic Control (PLC) combined troubleshooting learning system, which has made it possible to introduce program logic control into the industrial maintenance curriculum.

- The Engineering Technology Department at Mississippi Valley State University purchased material for three concentrations: Electronics Technology, Architectural Construction Management and Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD).
- Alcorn State University used its donation to assist in enhancement of robotics laboratories and STEM outreach activities.

DANIELS APPEARS IN APRIL EDITION OF EBONY



Symone Daniels has achieved a great deal in her 21 years on this earth. Among her many accomplishments, Daniels is a first generation college student and the 64th Miss Mississippi Valley State University.

Daniels is a member of Valley's Student Government Association, Valley Trailblazers, Women in Science and Technology and Early Monitoring Alert Program tutor.

In addition, she has added one more accomplishment to her growing list of accolades. The Belzoni, Mississippi native has been voted to appear in Ebony Magazine as part of their Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Campus Queens Contest.

The competition was held online from December 7th to January 18th and Daniels received enough votes to fall into the top ten category. In fact, she will be featured as the No. 1 contestant.

The top ten contestants are featured in the April 2017 issue of Ebony.

Ebony held the contest in the spirit that HBCUs were founded to promote black excellence and brilliance, and each reigning beauty was elected by her peers and/or school officials to represent those standards for her institution of higher learning.

The contest consisted of 63 HBCU queens from across the nation and to come in the No. 1 spot is something Daniels is proud of.

"It was unbelievable, honestly, and I was so shocked," said Daniels. "It's one thing to ask someone to vote for you on a specific day, but to have a competition that's ongoing for more than a month and to have people support you is a great feeling. To have Valley on the scale with the likes of Spelman and Howard and so many of the other larger institutions is major."

See "Queen" next page

MUSHI SELECTED FOR INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

Dr. Richard Mushi, associate professor and chair of the social sciences department, has been selected for a fellowship by the Advisory Council of the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship program (ADF). The project was submitted by St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) in Mwanza, Tanzania.

This fellowship is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY) and administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE). The project is titled, "Modeling and Promoting Research through Mentorship among Graduate Students and Junior Researchers in the Field of Education and Social Sciences." This is the second award to grow research capacity and mentor graduate students and early career faculty at Babcock University in Nigeria in 2015.

According to Dr. Mushi, this opportunity marks the beginning of long term scholarly



MUSHI

exchange programs."

The Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program provides funding and a structure for African-born academics at higher education institutions in the United States and Canada to collaborate with colleagues at accredited higher education institutions in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda on capacity-building education projects. Project activities can include curriculum co-development, research

partnerships with the largest private university in Tanzania, St. Augustine University and Mississippi Valley State University. "It is also my hope that the relationship may develop to a point of making official agreements where we can start partnerships

such as faculty and student exchange programs."

collaboration and graduate student teaching and mentoring. Projects are proposed and driven by faculty at host institutions in Africa and based on equitable, effective and mutually beneficial engagement.

Dr. Mushi holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree in public administration and a master's degree in public policy and administration from Jackson State University. He completed his undergraduate work at the University of Dar-Es-Salaam in his home country of Tanzania, where he received a degree in public administration and international relations. He has authored a book titled, "Privatization, Sustainable Economic Growth and Human Development in Developing Countries: A Case Study from Tanzania" along with several peer-reviewed articles.

FROM EARTHLY RECYCLING TO ART



Jylen Grayson, a senior engineering technology major, at Mississippi Valley State University has partnered with the Sustainability Initiative to bring recycling and art to another level. She used bottle tops to create her artwork. She is a native of Chicago, Illinois.

Queen continued from previous page

Daniels, who is a graduating senior majoring in biology with a minor in chemistry said the opportunity to represent Valley is one she does not take lightly. She is also completing her degree after just three years.

"Being able to represent Mississippi Valley State on a larger scale in any way is really one for the books," she said. "The fact that it's in *Ebony* makes it that much bigger. This achievement for me highlights the fact that it doesn't matter where you are from nor where you go; a person can do something big. With support from my community and on campus, I have been able to do a lot."

With the success from the competition, Daniels understands that without people getting behind her it wouldn't have been possible.

"Coming to school and being able to run for Miss Valley and this experience with *Ebony* would not have been possible without the support from my community and the student body here at Valley," she added. "I am so thankful to everyone."

DELTA MU DELTA INDUCTS NEW MEMBERS



The Iota Kappa Chapter of Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society in Business inducted 24 new members on April 4, 2017. The induction ceremony was conducted by the current chapter officers at the Business Education Building on the campus of Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena, Mississippi. Chapter officers for the 2016-2017 school term were Dont'e Wroten, president; Reagan Sheppard, vice president; Mariana Balbao, secretary; Felicia Johnson, treasurer; and Dr. Mary L. Shepherd, faculty advisor.

Pictured front row, from left are Dr. Curressia Brown, acting department chair, Katherine

Jackson, Linda Morris, Mariana Balbao, Felecia Johnson, and Dont'e Wroten; second row, Zeteriya Russell, Jessica Barnes, instructor; Jasmine Parker, Morgan Houston, Tamara Verdell, and Virginia Bolden; third row, Dr. Shepherd, Pamela Dunn, Delila Terry, Kiedgar Curb, Latrista Carter, Severia McCall, Shearra Hardwick, and Estelle Simms, instructor; fourth row, Naraseeyappa Rajanikanth, assistant professor; Christopher Lewis, Anthony Banks, Jarrell Gross, Rashaan Surles, Lexius Scott, Lauren Elliott, and Jangela Burden. Inductees not pictured are Valerie Davis, Glorieuse Tartibu, Tammie Hudson, Adam Love, and Jacqueline Reed.

COMMUNIQUÉ

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New Hashtag: #GOMVSU

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