



FISK NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEADERSHIP TRANSITION ANNOUNCED AT FISK UNIVERSITY

SEPTEMBER 21, 2015, NASHVILLE, TN — Fisk University has announced the resignation of President H. James Williams.

“We have accepted Dr. Williams’ resignation and thank him for his part in the advancements of Fisk in recent years,” said Barbara Landers Bowles, Chairperson of the Board.

During his presidency, Fisk has reaffirmed its regional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC); improved its retention rate; and has seen a 40 percent increase in enrollment to more than 850 students over the three years. Dr. Williams is pursuing other opportunities in higher education.

The interim president will be Frank L. Sims, a highly regarded business executive and community leader and a member of the Fisk Board of Trustees for three years.

“We appreciate Frank Sims stepping in as interim president while a national search for a new president is conducted,” said Bowles. “We began this academic year – our 150th – in a position of strength, academically and financially. Our focus on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) continues to expand, along with our global educational partnerships. During the past fiscal year, we have raised over \$5 million dollars and our alumni giving and private contributions continue to rise. ”

“It’s an exciting time to be at Fisk as we celebrate our 150th anniversary,” said Sims. “I am looking forward to spending time with our faculty, staff, students and others in the University community as we begin our historic sesquicentennial.”

Frank Sims spent his business career at Cargill Inc., serving in numerous capacities during his 36-year tenure, including as president of the company's North American grain division and as a corporate vice president. He currently serves on the Board of South Jersey Industries; is past Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis; Vice Chairman of the U.S. Marine Transportation System Advisory Council; and also served on the Board of Piper Jaffray, a mid-tier investment banking firm. Sims earned his bachelor's degree in business administration at Paul Quinn College in Dallas, Texas. He and his wife, Robyn, a Fisk alumna, have three children Bradford, Leigh-Kirstin and Franklin, also a Fisk alumnus.

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About Fisk University:

Founded in 1866, Fisk University is Nashville's first institution of higher education and currently ranks in the top 20% of all liberal arts institutions in the nation according to *The Washington Monthly*. According to the American Physical Society, Fisk is the #1 producer of underrepresented minority Master's in Physics degrees. Fisk is ranked in the top 15 institutions for awarding the Master's in Physics degree for all students, and tied for fourth place for Master's degrees awarded to women. Fisk is the fifth highest ranked institution in Tennessee in *Forbes* magazine's 2015-2016 edition of "America's Top 650 Colleges." Fisk has ranked in *Princeton Review's* "Best Southeastern Colleges" publication for 23 consecutive years. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Fisk in the elite Tier One liberal arts institutions. Fisk has earned 4 *R&D 100 Awards*, the only HBCU to do so, for work in the creation of radiation detectors developed in collaboration with several national laboratories and corporations. According to the National Science Foundation, Fisk produces more African-Americans who earn doctoral degrees in the natural sciences than any school in the nation. For more information on Fisk University, please visit www.fisk.edu.