Rust Mourns the Loss of Former President Dr. Earnest A. Smith

A Pioneer in Rust College History

Rust College sadly announces the passing of its 9th President, Dr. Earnest A. Smith, who served the College from 1957-1967. Dr. Smith passed Friday morning, November 13, 2009, at 5:00 a.m. in Yazoo City, Mississippi, after a brief illness.

Dr. Smith served Rust at a critical time in its history and the history of the State of Mississippi. For the College, it was the period in which the sponsoring church was deciding if the College should continue or be closed. On the state agenda were voting rights challenges and public accommodations issues that involved the College and its students. Dr. Smith led the charge on both fronts and laid the groundwork for the survival of the College while at the same time encouraging students to be active in the movement,” said Rust president Dr. David L. Beckley, who was a student during the closing years of the Smith administration.

The annual Earnest A. & Milverta G. Smith Endowed Alumni Lecture Series was named for Dr. Smith and his wife. Each year, distinguished guests are invited to Rust College to participate in the lecture series which is attended by students, faculty, alumni and friends of Rust College. Dr. Smith was also a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

The memorial service for Dr. Smith was held Wednesday, November 18, 2009 at Morehouse Auditorium in the Doyce Fine Arts Center. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to Rust College in the name of the Smith – Gooden Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Dr. Earnest A. Smith is survived by his wife, Mrs. Milverta G. Smith.

Celebrating 143 Years of Rust College

Alumni and friends of Rust College joined students, faculty and staff to celebrate the 143rd anniversary of the founding of the College. The Founders’ schedule was packed with activities, including the parade, band concert and coronation, for those who traveled from near and far. Dr. Leslie Burl McLemore, ’64, served as speaker for the annual convocation and was also one of the recipients of the distinguished Tower of Leadership Award along with Mr. Willie B. “Wazir” Peacock and Mayor W.J. Jones of Coahoma, Mississippi. Awards and recognition were given to alumni and friends of Rust College who have financially supported the College during the past year, including those in the class of 1964, who have been busy meeting their goal of raising $75,000 in scholarship funds for Rust. The class surpassed its goal and have now pledged to raise $100,000. Dr. McLemore issued a challenge to other classes to raise more money for the College as well. Also recognized and inducted into the Rust College Athletic Hall of Fame was the 1984 Lady Bearcats team who won the 1984 Division III NCAA National Championship.

The 143rd Rust College Founders’ Celebration brought good times, old memories and plenty of fun for all of those involved. (Founders’ photos on next page)
Celebrating 143 Years of Rust College

Mr. Homecoming Justin Deloach
L to r: Mrs. Suprena Duncan, Mrs. Willa Terry and Mrs. Christine Ratcliff
Director of Enrollment JoAnn Scott
with sophomore Chelsea Harris
The 2009-2010 High Court
Terica Jackson & Adrianna Miller

The 2009-2010 Royal Court

Miss Senior Sylvia Collins
Miss Rust 2008-2009 Micaela Scott Santos

Holly Springs High School Marching Band
Fun at the Carnival
The ladies of Emma Elzy Hall display their school spirit
Dr. Leslie Mclemore, 64 Speaker, 143rd Founders Convocation
Miss Pre-Alumni Roshiundria Williamson

Rust Welcomes Middle School Students for Visit

The Office of Enrollment Services hosted a group of sixth-eighth graders Thursday, November 12. Students with the A.V.I.D (Advance Via Individual Determination) program at Sherwood Middle School in Memphis, Tennessee listened to Rust faculty as they gave insight on college life. Mrs. Helen Street spoke about financial aid options and Dr. Juanita-Seals Jones talked to the students about the first-year college experience.

Joining the students were Stacey Hill, ’93, and Cynthia Watson, ’00, who are Rust graduates, now teaching at Sherwood Middle. Also in attendance was Kim Henry, ’04, now the Assistant District Attorney for Harrison County, Mississippi and Kenneth Bailey, ’02, who is a supervisor for Youth Villages in Memphis, Tennessee. Youth Villages is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping emotionally and behaviorally troubled children and their families live successfully.

The kids were also treated to a mini step-show provided by the men of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity and a tour of the campus.