SEARCH PROSPECTUS:

President
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The Board of Trustees, through its Presidential Search Committee, invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the position of President of Rust College. The College seeks an innovative forward-thinking leader who will bring demonstrated success in senior-level leadership as well as a collaborative, consensus-building leadership style. It is expected that the next president of Rust College will take office in the summer of 2020.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Rust College was established in 1866 by the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Its founders were missionaries from the North who opened a school in Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, accepting adults of all ages, as well as children, for instruction in elementary subjects. A year later the first building on the present campus was erected.

In 1870, the school was chartered as Shaw University, honoring the Reverend S.O. Shaw, who made a gift of $10,000 to the new institution. In 1892, the name was changed to Rust University to avoid confusion with another Shaw University. The name was a tribute to Richard S. Rust of Cincinnati, Ohio, Secretary of the Freedmen’s Aid Society. In 1915, the name was changed to the more realistic one, Rust College.
As students progressed, high school and college courses were added to the curriculum, and in 1878 two students were graduated from the college department. As public schools for Negroes became more widespread the need for private schools decreased, and in 1930 the grade school was discontinued. The high school continued to function until 1953.

A significant change in the administration of the institution took place in 1920 when Dr. M.S. Davage became president, the first Negro to hold that position. Dr. L. M. McCoy (1924), his successor, was the first alumnus to serve his Alma Mater as president. He was followed in 1957 by Dr. Earnest A. Smith, an alumnus, class of 1937. In 1967, Dr. William A. McMillan, a non-alumnus, assumed the presidency. In 1993, Dr. David L. Beckley, an alumnus, class of 1967, became the eleventh president of Rust College.

Among approximately 20,000 former students of Rust College, many completed only their elementary or secondary education. However, more than 5,500 have graduated from the college department over the course of years. Among these alumni are bishops of the United Methodist Church and other church denominations, public school teachers and administrators, college presidents, lawyers, physicians, businessmen, government leaders and ministers. The most nationally acclaimed, however, is Ida B. Wells. Ms. Wells was an abolitionist, civil rights leader, feminist, founder of the Association of Colored Women, and co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

NOTABLE RUST ALUMNI

Alvin Childress  
Actor, starred in “Amos and Andy”

Anita Ward Richardson  
Singer, famous song Ring My Bell

Rev. Dr. Jerry Young  
President of the National Baptist Association

Ruby Elzy  
Famous opera singer

Ida B. Wells  
Barnett- Journalist
The College is located in the city of Holly Springs in the Northwestern part of Mississippi. Situated approximately 35 miles southeast of Memphis, Tennessee, the College is on U.S. Highway 178 and Mississippi Highway 7. There are numerous historical attractions: The Ida B. Wells Barnett Museum, Kate Freeman Clark Art Gallery, Marshall County Historical Museum, Mississippi Blues Trail markers, and the Yellow Fever Martyrs Museum, to name a few. In addition, the University of Mississippi, the state’s flagship institution, is located in the nearby town of Oxford.

Holly Springs has numerous events throughout the year. Whether it’s the North Mississippi Hill Country Picnic, Ida B. Wells Barnett Birthday Celebration, Blues Alley Music Series, Hummingbird Festival, Annual Tour of Historic Homes, Christmas Tour of Homes, Audubon Native Plant Sale or just shopping around the town’s historic square, Holly Springs offers rich, engaging cultural attractions.

Rust College is a historically Black, co-educational, senior liberal arts college founded in 1866 by the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to offer quality programs in business, education, humanities, science and math, and social science to prepare students for leadership and service in a global society.

Our vision for the future reflects an institution of teaching and learning, internal and external to the classroom. Students will come to prepare for careers while living and studying in an environment that nurtures academic and personal development.
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2014-2019

1. To operationalize programs and activities that are firmly based in the institutional mission;
2. To utilize an institutional model for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of college operations as they relate to the institution’s mission;
3. To maintain a strong academic program with a focus on teaching, research, and community service in order to prepare students for a global society;
4. To institutionalize an enrollment management system aimed at recruitment, retention, and graduation of top quality students with the skills necessary for success in their chosen fields;
5. To stabilize enrollment at 1,000 FTE students;
6. To improve the system for acquiring and managing the College’s fiscal resources to include a projected increase in the permanent endowment to $35 million; and
7. To continue to upgrade the College’s technologies to meet the needs and challenges of present and future students.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP) GOALS

(Reference: 2009-2014 Strategic Plan)

A. To identify and modify institutional attitudes and practices that may cause students to feel disengaged from the institution;
B. To increase student engagement with the curriculum, the advising process, and student services during the entire matriculation to graduation;
C. To maintain an environment that will enhance the intellectual life of the campus and foster opportunities for community service that will in turn result in lifelong learning and service.
GOAL

To make Rust College the premier private liberal arts college in North Mississippi, serving young people from throughout the world.

WE ARE

A college related to the United Methodist Church
A college with sound programs designed to serve students who have a variety of academic preparations
A college that recognizes the threefold functions of education as teaching, research, and community service, with its primary mission as teaching
A college with programs designed to acquaint students with cultural, moral, and spiritual values both in theory and in practice
A college housing special collections of acclaimed Civil Rights leaders.
A college that provides an opportunity for education to all, regardless of race, religion, gender, national origin, ethnic background or sexual orientation.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

In the early history of Rust College, its first president, the Reverend A.C. McDonald, stated the purpose of Rust College as follows:

“It is our aim to not do hot-house work, seeking to hurry students through a college curriculum, as do many mushroom schools in the South, sending them into the battle of life only to disgrace themselves and bring reproach upon the cause of education at large, but take the by far more difficult and tedious plan of trying to lay well a foundation for a broad, thorough, and practical education, such as shall fit our pupils for long lives of usefulness to themselves, their race, and the church.”

President McDonald gave the criterion for testing this purpose: “By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them,” which is the motto of Rust College, and a good criterion for its purpose. While the elements of the purpose as originally stated by President McDonald remain Rust's essence, the scope and expression of the purpose have expanded and must be expressed in terms of demands of education in a more complex and sophisticated society.
Rust College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools - Commission on Colleges to award Associate and Baccalaureate degrees.

ACCREDITATION

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Rust College offers the following degree programs:
- Bachelor of Science
  - Bachelor of Arts
  - Associate of Science
  - Bachelor of Social Work

Academic majors are grouped into the following divisions:
- Division of Business: Business Administration (Areas of Concentration: Accounting, Management, Computer Information Systems)
- Division of Education: Elementary Education; Secondary Education (Business, English, Biology, Mathematics, Social Science); Child Care Management; Early Childhood Education
- Division of Humanities: English (Areas of Concentration: Literature, Writing); Mass Communication/Broadcast Journalism Mass Communication/Print Journalism
- Division of Science and Mathematics: Biology; Computer Science; Chemistry; Mathematics
- Division of Social Sciences: Criminal Justice; History; Political Science; Social Work; Sociology
The student-faculty rate at Rust College is 20:1. Rust supports 49 full-time and 8 part-time faculty members. Half of all full-time faculty hold Ph.D.’s. Rust College operates on a module system, which is an 8-week semester class system that allows the college to enroll new students every 8 weeks.

**FACULTY ACADEMIC INITIATIVES**
The major activity of the 2019 Fall semester has centered around the review of established program goals. The challenge has been to determine the best modes of assessment. Faculty have been specifically focused on measurement of program outcomes of divisions and student learning outcomes of degrees. To assess outcomes, faculty have identified appropriate ways to measure each outcome, determined the point at which assessment should occur, set performance benchmarks, and measured outcomes over time to produce data that foster informed decision making. Following the assessment of outcomes, faculty collaboratively collected and analyzed data to determine the meaning of the results, established how students have performed comparative to the target benchmark, and when appropriate, developed plans to improve student learning. The hallmark of the assessment process is identifying opportunities to improve student learning and ensuring that the institution is accomplishing its mission.

The following reports are presented from the major units of academic affairs. Each has been asked to summarize accomplishments leading into the 2019-2020 academic year. These accomplishments are the ultimate measures of how well faculty are doing in meeting program goals. The result of all planning is the graduate produced.

The 2019 Fall semester has taken a focus on assessment of entering freshmen. The ACT, High School Grade Point Average, First-year grades at Rust and performance on the Edmentum Exam (Computer Courseware) are used as review of academic performance levels. Each entering student has a file with these scores. The Edmentum exam is measured in three areas: Reading Comprehension, Language Arts Assessment and Mathematics Assessment. Instructors have student files with all named scores for review. Laboratory assistance is available for areas of need.

Entering students were immediately introduced to the potential degrees and the full faculty after having been admitted to the college. This was a part of the freshman orientation weeks as opposed to the beginning of the semester. Students had an early opportunity to meet faculty in each degree area. This proved to be a needed activity for students to become aware of expectations of potential majors.

Greater attention was given to job placements and graduate school entry. It has been agreed that these activities give indication of the strength of the major.

Each division was directly involved in freshman orientation. Students had an early opportunity to decide on majors. Greater attention was given to graduate tracking. Job placement and graduate school attendance serves as a primary gauge for program accountability.
Student Life at Rust College is to build, engage, educate, and enhance the overall undergraduate experience through a variety of programs to include, but not limited to, the First Year Experience Program, Residential Life, Campus Safety, Student Health Center, Student Activities, Religious Life, Student Government Association. These programs provide opportunities for students to meet and interact with their peers, develop lifelong relationships, embrace diversity, and build communities.

Rust College provides students opportunities to build their leadership skills through its Residential Assistance Program, Peer Mentor Program, Greek Life, and a host of other clubs and organizations for which students serve in leadership roles such as President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary. These opportunities allow students to engage, think critically, and exercise decision making skills to harness their skills in leadership and to prepare them to compete in a global society.

To engage students and meet their social needs, Rust College is committed to hosting a variety of student activities in partnership with student clubs and organizations to enhance the quality of campus and social life. Rust is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and provides very engaging religious activities to help build faith, motivate, and encourage students while matriculating through their college experience. Additionally, the faculty and staff engage students through structured advising, lecturing, tutoring, to enhance student morale and self-esteem and to prepare them students for the future. Because of Student Life, students feel that Rust College is a second home of family-oriented individuals guiding students with an opportunity to gain stability, experience, and most importantly academic enhancement.

**Student Admissions and Makeup**

Currently the enrollment at Rust stands at 738, (92% full-time) students for the 2019-2020 school year. The 2019-2020 class has a make up of 679 (92.005%) African American/Black and 0.7% (47) claiming two or more ethnicities and 408 (55%) females between the ages of 18 and 24 (91.4%). The previous four academic school terms have generated a fluctuation in new student enrollee percentages. There was a 724 student-applicant increase between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic school years which yielded a 17.42% increase. The number of applicants for the 2017-2018 dwindled to 4,312 but the institution saw a significant increase in the preceding year as the number of applicants increased to 6,207. Applicant percentages over last four years have consistently ranged between 17 to 24 percent. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of applicants are usually accepted while 10% of initial applicants are converted to enrolled students.
Rust College seeks an experienced individual to bring both stable leadership and dynamic changes to the College at a critical time in its history. The next president should be a visible leader who can embrace and foster the rich heritage and identity of Rust as a historically black, faith-based College.

The next president will have the opportunity to examine the current administrative and organizational structure to determine any changes and articulate the roles and responsibilities within the current, or any new, structure as well as assure an environment in which individuals are held accountable and service to students and their success are paramount cultural values of the college.

DESIRED EXPERIENCE AND ATTRIBUTES
The next President of Rust College should possess many of the following aspects of experience, character and leadership:

- Earned doctorate or terminal degree.
- History of maintaining the highest moral and ethical standards both personally and professionally.
- Ability to embrace and advance the history, mission, and core values of Rust as a historically black faith-based institution.
- Broad knowledge of current and emerging issues facing higher education.
- Strong academic background including successful teaching experience.
- Respectful of students, faculty, staff, board and all other constituencies.
- Student-centered focus.
- Experience in building relationships, nurturing alumni engagement; and fund-raising, particularly leading successful major gifts campaigns.
- Experience and ability to oversee-marketing, branding and overall communications strategy.
- Leadership style grounded in servant leadership and encompassing strategic thinking, problem-solving and solution-oriented approaches.
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to be a strong, visible, and enthusiastic campus advocate and presence.

- Transparent approachable and engaging communications style.
- Collaborative, consensus-building leadership style.
- Open to thoughtful and appropriate innovation.
- Demonstrated experience in managing the complexities of institutional change and the interpersonal skills to make decisions and attain consensus in a thoughtful and purposeful manner.
- Willing to make a deep personal commitment to Rust and the community, with the ability to maintain a visible campus presence while simultaneously engaging in a variety of other duties.
- Record of successful working relationships with a broad range of external constituencies for philanthropic and community engagement as well as strategic partnerships.
- Nurtures respectful, collegial relationships with faculty and staff.
- Understands and honors the relationship of the President and the Board of Trustees.
- Experience managing budgets, accomplishing objectives with limited resources, and creativity in expanding resources.
- Demonstrated record of systematically increasing student enrollment, retention and graduation rates.
- High level experience in higher education.
Rust College is being assisted in this search by Academic Search, Inc. Prospective candidates and nominators may arrange a confidential discussion with senior consultants Shirley R. Pippins at shirley.pippins@academicsearch.org or Sidney Ribeau at sidney.ribeau@academicsearch.org.

Nominations and applications can be submitted electronically to:

Rustpresident@academicsearch.org

The position will remain open until filled however, for full consideration by the search committee, applications should be submitted by March 15, 2020.

Applications should consist of the following documents, in PDF format:

1. A detailed cover letter expressing the candidates interest in and qualifications for the position;
2. A current curriculum vitae (CV);
3. A list of professional references representing diverse relationships with the candidate including current contact information and a note explaining the working relationship of each to the applicant. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate.

Rust College is an equal opportunity employer.
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search, Inc. is assisting Rust College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services exclusively to institutions of higher education. Academic Search was founded on the principle of strengthening higher education leadership through professional search services. We are the only search firm in the nation with a formal relationship to a premier leadership development program. As the subsidiary of the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI), Academic Search provides substantial financial support to a number of leadership identification, development, and support programs across all sectors of public and private higher education. For more information, visit http://www.academicsearch.org/.

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