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BETHUNE-COOKMAN UNIVERSITY NAMES DR. LAWRENCE M. DRAKE II INTERIM PRESIDENT

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (June 15, 2022) – The Board of Trustees of Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU) has elected Dr. Lawrence (“Larry”) M. Drake II as Interim President effective immediately. The election of Dr. Drake follows the University’s announcement on June 8 that outgoing Interim President Hiram C. Powell decided to retire.

Dr. Drake currently serves as Dean of B-CU’s College of Business & Entrepreneurship (CBE) and has been instrumental in designing and co-sponsoring the University’s strategic review process, “Re-Imagining B-CU: Now, Next and Beyond.” Dr. Drake will continue to serve as Dean of CBE.

“Bethune-Cookman University is looking to the future. As a result, we must transform our beloved university to meet the changing needs of our students. Dr. Larry Drake has the academic experience, leadership skills, financial expertise, and inspired vision to move us forward,” said Board Chair Belvin Perry, Jr. “We’ve all been impressed by the changes Dr. Drake is making at CBE and the strategic, inclusive approach he is taking to ‘Re-Imagining B-CU.’ Dr. Drake will drive our transformation while we search for our next president. The Board has made a thoughtful, deliberate, and inspired choice in selecting Dr. Drake.”

“I am deeply grateful to the Board for the opportunity to help advance Dr. Bethune’s incredible legacy into the 21st century,” Dr. Drake said. “The truth is, we don’t have a minute to waste, so I pledge to give everything I have to advance our vital mission. With ‘Re-Imagining B-CU’ as our North Star, my priorities are the four pillars of every successful university – financial health, faculty excellence, student outcomes and community partnership.”

As announced on April 22, the Board is undertaking a thorough and inclusive search process among a diverse pool of qualified candidates to select the University’s eighth president. While that search is underway, the Board continues to honor its fiduciary responsibility to ensure the University has the right leader for the challenges and opportunities it faces today.



About Dr. Drake



As the first in his family to earn a college degree, Dr. Drake began at Fisk University in 1972, ultimately returning in 2021 to finally complete his Bachelor of Arts degree in Elected Studies. Dr. Drake had already received his first BA from Georgia State University in 1977. He went on to earn an MBA from Rockhurst University in 1990 where he was an Executive Fellow. In 2013, he was awarded an MA in Psychology from APA-accredited Fielding Graduate University and earned a PhD in Psychology with an emphasis in Media Psychology in 2015. He also holds certifications from the prestigious International Coaching Federation and is a member of Forbes Magazine's Coaches Council. Dr. Drake currently serves as Dean of the College of Business and Entrepreneurship at Bethune-Cookman University, and is the President and CEO of LEADership, Education and Development (**LEAD**), with both organizations focused on developing equal learning access models targeting a wide variety of learners, emphasizing a focus on assisting under-resourced communities and individuals with acquiring and applying 21st century skills and competencies.

Dr. Drake's scholarship and research interests include but are not limited to effects of human behavior at the intersection of cognitive science, applied psychology media innovation and immersive learning. An extension of his literary interest includes his latest book "Color Him Father" (2019) which has received critical acclaim within the US and around the world on the subject of Black parenthood and the myths about "Black Fatherhood." He has also written several papers or articles related to his field of research and has been featured in articles including "Inroads: Preparing The Pipeline," Harvard Business Review (1990), "Stories About Black Men and Their Consequences," National Academy of Medicine (February, 2018)," *The*



Effects of Domestic Violence Ideology, Media Narratives and Images on Male Victimization,” Fielding Graduate University (2012), and *“Digital Literacy and the Achievement Gap”* (2011). He’s been featured in several publications including: *“The Color of Success,” Black Enterprise* (2010), *“Business Success Beyond America,” The Network Journal* (2005), *“Room at the Top: PepsiCo's KFC Unit scouts for Blacks and Women for its Top Echelons,” Wall Street Journal* (1991). *“Watching Black Panther with racially diverse youth: relationships between film viewing, ethnicity, ethnic identity, empowerment, and wellbeing.” Review of Communication* (2020)

Dr. Drake has presented at scientific sessions including the American Psychological Association (APA) annual meeting where he led a panel on the topic *“Two Kinds of Presence: A Comparative Analysis of Face-to-Face and Technology–Based Mediated Communication Methods and The Executive Coaching Experience.”*

Prior to joining B-CU and LEAD, Dr. Drake served as Chairman of HOPE 360 INC, an executive development consultancy. He previously has served as interim President/CEO, The Executive Leadership Council, President of Haven Media Group, SVP/GM Cablevision Systems Corp, and VP/GM, KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) Division formerly owned by PepsiCo, where he was responsible for 1200 restaurants, 6000 employees, and \$900M in revenue.

In addition, Dr. Drake enjoyed an impressive 21-year career with The Coca-Cola Company, holding several key positions with the organization beginning in 1980. During his tenure, he served as Division President & CEO of The Coca-Cola Company’s Nigeria and Equatorial Africa Division which consisted of 15 West African countries, responsible for the company's operating effectiveness and financial performance throughout the western portion of the continent. This role included political engagement, public policy, and advocacy across a landscape of very diverse countries while working globally with franchise ownership partners across Africa, Greece, Europe, Latin America, and the US. The Division was part of Coca-Cola’s \$4B enterprise comprised of 54 countries and 2 independent territories across the continent. Relocating over 20 times, between, 1980 – 2007 prior to his appointment as Division President and CEO, Dr. Drake also held numerous positions of increasing responsibility including Managing Director of The Africa Group, Director, Northeast US Account Group, Region Vice-President Operations, and Director, Sales Development.

Dr. Drake has shown throughout his career to be highly successful in collaborating and working with various public/private boards of directors, serving in such board roles as Chairman, President, member of the Executive Committee, Audit Committee, Nominations Committee, Compensation Committee, and Fundraising Committee. Past and current board service includes, Groundswell SPC, The Executive Leadership Council & Foundation, The National Conference for Community & Justice, The California Science Center, Crystal Stairs Inc.,



Nehemiah Project Ministries International, Judson University, Jarvis Christian College, and is a distinguished member of Leadership Atlanta and a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

When he is not leading organizations, writing, or serving his community, Dr. Drake enjoys spending quality time with his wife, three daughters, two sons and his six amazing grandchildren.

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About Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU)

Mary McLeod Bethune founded the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls in 1904. In 1923, it became a co-ed high school as a result of a merger with Cookman Institute of Jacksonville, Fla. One year later, the school became affiliated with the United Methodist Church, evolved into a junior college by 1931 and became known as Bethune-Cookman College. In 1941, the Florida State Department of Education approved a four-year baccalaureate program offering liberal arts and teacher education. On Feb. 14, 2007, the Board of Trustees approved a name change to Bethune-Cookman University.