



RUTH J. SIMMONS ANNOUNCED AS PVAMU'S 141ST SPRING COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

PRAIRIE VIEW, Texas (March 3, 2023) – Prairie View A&M University has announced that Ruth J. Simmons, former president of PVAMU, will serve as speaker for its 141st Spring Commencement on May 13, 2023.

A noted leader in higher education, Simmons served in various faculty and administrative roles at the University of Southern California, Princeton University, and Spelman College before becoming president of Smith College, the largest women's college in the United States. Prior to taking on the top administrator role at PVAMU, Simmons served as President of Brown University from 2001-2012, becoming the first African American to lead an Ivy League institution.

Simmons assumed the leadership of PVAMU in 2017, serving for six years as the eighth president. Under her leadership, the University attained the prestigious Carnegie R2 classification, expanded academic offerings, and surpassed fundraising goals, including receiving a \$50 million gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, the largest gift in the University's 146-year history.

"University Presidents are generally charged with the responsibility of selecting commencement speakers. As acting president, with the support of PVAMU executive officers and the TAMU System, I extended an invitation to Ruth Simmons to serve as the Spring 2023 commencement speaker. We are delighted that she accepted the invitation and look forward to the inspirational message she will share with our graduates and all in attendance," said Michael L. McFrazier, acting president of PVAMU.

Visit www.pvamu.edu/commencement for more information about the event.

###

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY, founded in 1876, is the second oldest public institution of higher education in the state of Texas and the third largest Historically Black College/University (HBCU) in the nation. Designated as an "institution of the first class" in the Texas Constitution, the enrollment exceeds 9,000 students and over 80,000 graduates. PVAMU offers academic programs through its seven colleges, Undergraduate Studies and School of Architecture, boasting degree options leading to bachelor's to doctoral-level degrees. A Carnegie-classified high-research (R2) University and a member of The Texas A&M University System, PVAMU is dedicated to fulfilling its land-grant mission of achieving excellence in teaching, research and service. For more information, visit www.pvamu.edu.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Candace Johnson

Executive Director of Marketing and
Communications

936-261-1566 • [cajohnson@pvamu.edu](mailto:cjohnson@pvamu.edu)

Marchita Shilo

Assistant Director of Marketing and
Communications

936-261-2134 • mlshilo@pvamu.edu

The Office for Marketing and Communications • 936-261-1560 • www.pvamu.edu/marcomm