Hampton University President William R. Harvey announced that alumnus Rashida Jones ’02, President of MSNBC, will serve as the University’s 150th and 151st Commencement speaker on May 9, 2021. Commencement will be held virtually at 10 a.m.

“Ms. Rashida Jones and her professional success are an example of what Hampton University founder Gen. Samuel Chapman Armstrong envisioned when he founded this institution to educate recently freed slaves 153 years ago. His dream was to prepare the best and the brightest to lead our great nation and make a positive impact on the world at large,” said Hampton University President, Dr. William R. Harvey. “Her address will truly be well-received on this historic day. Not only will we recognize our graduates, but this ceremony will also recognize Hampton University taking another major step towards returning to normalcy since the beginning of the pandemic. Ms. Rashida Jones’s star is among the brightest in her field. She will inspire and enlighten our graduates as they prepare to make their own historical marks on the world.”

Jones is a 2002 Hampton University Mass Media Arts graduate and has had a very successful career in the journalism industry. Jones became the first Black executive to lead one of the major television news organizations when she assumed her current position Feb. 1, 2021. Under Jones’ leadership, MSNBC finished February as the #1 network in all of cable television. The historic victory comes during a month of around-the-clock breaking news, including the second impeachment trial of Donald Trump, the first full month of the Biden administration and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Her industry credits include news director of WIS-TV, director of live programming and executive producer for The Weather Channel, as well as producer for WTKR-TV. Prior to her appointment, Jones served as the senior vice president for MSNBC and NBC News, succeeding longtime network president Phil Griffin. As senior vice president, Jones led breaking news and major events coverage, including helping oversee the second presidential debate, which NBC News’ Kristen Welker became only the second Black woman to moderate a presidential debate solo. Jones also oversaw MSNBC’s daytime and weekend programming.

In 2019, Jones was inducted into the Hampton University Scripps Howard School Hall of Fame.

Hampton University in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health Hampton & Peninsula Health Districts Vaccinate 500 Citizens March 20th at the HU Convocation Center

Hampton University in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health Hampton & Peninsula Health Districts (VDH) administered 500 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to select individuals who pre-registered with the VDH and select HU staff members that fall in Phase 1b of the VDH COVID-19 Vaccination Response Plan on March 20th. The Hampton University Convocation Center served as a mass vaccination clinic and began immunizations at 9 am.

“I’m just as happy as I can be that our “Home by the Sea” is joining the fight to end the pandemic with the opening of the Hampton University Community COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic,” said Dr. William R. Harvey, President of Hampton University. “It has always been Hampton’s mission and responsibility to serve our community and now with these vaccines our faculty and students will administer this much-needed life-saving vaccine to the community. Hampton University is dedicated to impacting our larger community.”

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in and outside of the classroom. Our ultimate goal is to promote character building, community service, and cultural awareness – key qualities for students’ success at Hampton University and beyond.”

The clinic was led by Dr. Michelle Penn-Marshall, Vice President for Research, and managed by the Schools of Pharmacy and Nursing. Additionally, faculty, staff, and students from several departments, including the School of Science; Departments of Communicative Sciences and Disorders, Biology, and Physical Therapy were on site to help. The clinic provided individuals with their first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine and operated on two shifts: 9 AM-12 PM, and from 1 PM-3:45 PM.

This clinic served individuals who pre-registered with the Virginia Department of Health Hampton & Peninsula Health Districts and received an email to schedule a time.

The current vaccine demand far outweighs supply, and the Virginia Department of Health Hampton & Peninsula Health Districts is urgently trying to vaccinate citizens in the order in which they applied.

The Hampton University Community COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic is the latest example of the institution doing its part to serve the region and help combat this deadly virus. On March 1, Hampton University unveiled its new mobile testing and vaccination station that will provide COVID-19 vaccines to people in underserved areas of Hampton Roads. In December of 2020, Dr. Harvey and other local leaders received the COVID-19 vaccine to publicly support taking the vaccine and encourage the African American community to take it as well. The African American community has had a long-standing fear and hesitancy as it relates to taking vaccines since the Tuskegee Experiment in 1932.

**Hampton University Partners with Hampton VA Medical Center to Open Mass Vaccination Clinic for Veterans**

Hampton University has entered into a partnership with the Hampton VA Medical Center (HVAMC) to utilize the Hampton University Convocation Center as a mass vaccination clinic for veterans and their caregivers, beginning March 8th.

“At Hampton University, it is a part of our DNA to be of service to others,” said Dr. William R. Harvey, Hampton University President. “It is my firm belief that it is our responsibility to deliver this much-needed life-saving service to our underserved communities and veterans. I’m proud to have served in our country’s armed forces and pleased that Hampton University can make an impact in the lives of those who have bravely served our country.”

The HU Convocation Center provides the HVAMC a larger space than what is available at the medical center and makes vaccinations more easily accessible to veterans. The larger space also allows the HVAMC to schedule more appointments for eligible veterans, who are at least 65 years old with at-risk health conditions.

“As a Historically Black College and University, we are trusted in the communities of color, so that assists in minimizing hesitancy,” said Dr. Michelle Penn-Marshall, Hampton University Vice President for Research. “We are going to work with the VA to ensure that as many veterans as possible have the ability to get vaccinated and can do so at the Convocation Center.”

Vaccinations for veterans are currently by appointment only. For additional information visit https://www.hampton.va.gov/services/covid-19-vaccines.asp.

**Hampton University to Provide Up to a Five Percent Raise to Annually Contracted Employees for 2021-2022 Academic Year**

As the world continues to navigate through the difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. William R. Harvey, Hampton University’s President, is again expressing his heartfelt appreciation by providing up to a 5% raise to all employees with an annual contract for academic year 2021-2022.

“Over the last 12 months, Hampton University, the nation, and the world have been challenged like never before due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Dr. Harvey. “Despite all that has been going on, Hampton has done well with our fundraising, fueled by the $30 million gift from Ms. MacKenzie Scott. Because of her gift and others, we have been able to enhance student housing, academic buildings, athletic facilities, establish additional student scholarships, implement emergency funds for faculty, students and staff, as well as upgrade our technological infrastructure. We also recognize that everyone has experienced some level of stress, anxiety, and uncertainty during this time. Again, I would like to thank members of the Hampton family who have responded to these challenges in a terrific fashion. It is our hope that this increase will be of assistance to you in the future.”

This is the third example of Hampton University assisting its workforce in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the onset of the pandemic, it was announced that annual faculty and staff raises would not occur. However, due to the charitable gifts that Hampton has received from others during these trying times, Dr. Harvey reversed that decision and gave all faculty and staff a 2% pay increase, effective January 1, 2021, as well as a $200 Christmas bonus and a $25 gift for the much anticipated and celebrated annual turkey give-a-way.

Dr. Harvey announced in February the distribution of bonus checks to select members of the Hampton University workforce. Based on current employees’ annual salaries ($50,000 or less), specific individuals received either a $125 or $250 bonus.
Hampton University has received $50,000 in contributions from GEICO to create scholarships and other activities which serve to support Hampton students, from a wide variety of backgrounds, in their academic progression.

“Hampton University continues to evolve, making new strides in research, developing future leaders, and staying at the forefront of innovation. Thank you to GEICO for investing in the success of our students. We know that Hamptonians will truly benefit from this new partnership and will go on to be leaders in their respective fields, and will truly change the world,” said Hampton University President, Dr. William R. Harvey. Named the GEICO Student & Faculty Engagement Fund, contributions received will support multi-faceted strategies, including the below efforts:

• Scholarships for students in key majors such as Engineering, Business, Marketing, and Communications;
• Career program engagement and establishment of a dedicated GEICO/ Hampton University Career Center internship pipeline; and
• Focused engagement with Hampton’s Office of Athletics to create through a unique initiative titled: GEICO MVP Café.

Additionally, through the Hampton University Office of Student Activities, community service and outreach programs will be administered as part of this program. Carl Tims, GEICO’s Chief Diversity Officer, said: “This program represents the first such program of its kind for GEICO and an HBCU, and is intended to expose diverse students to the rich opportunities available within the company. We are delighted to initiate this effort and look forward to long-term engagement with Hampton.

About GEICO
GEICO (Government Employees Insurance Company), the second-largest auto insurer in the U.S., was founded in 1936 and insures more than 28 million vehicles in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. A member of the Berkshire Hathaway family of companies, GEICO employs more than 43,000 associates countrywide. GEICO constantly strives to make lives better by protecting people against unexpected events while saving them money and providing an outstanding customer experience. Along with personal auto insurance, commercial auto and personal umbrella coverages are also available. Homeowners, renters, condo, flood, identity theft, term life, and more coverages are written through non-affiliated insurance companies and are secured through the GEICO Insurance Agency, Inc. Visit geico.com for a quote or to learn more.

Hampton University Welcomes C-Suite Executives as Speakers for School of Engineering & Technology 25th Anniversary Celebration

Speakers to include Brett Hart, United Airlines President; Jay Alexander, Keysight Technologies Sr. VP and Chief Tech Officer; and Michael Kennedy, KAI Enterprises CEO

The Hampton University School of Engineering & Technology is celebrating its 25th Anniversary with a fully virtual and interactive experience featuring some of the nation’s top C-suite executives serving as keynote speakers on Friday, April 16, from 9 am until 4 pm. Tickets for the event are now on sale.

“We are very thankful to the C-suite executive leadership from United Airlines, KAI Enterprises, and Keysight Technologies for their support of Hampton and our School of Engineering & Technology’s 25th Anniversary celebration,” said Hampton University President, Dr. William R. Harvey. “Their commitment to building greater diversity within their industries begins by engaging with our young engineering and technology professionals and we are truly appreciative of them for sharing their experiences and valuable time with our students.”

CEOs and Senior Vice Presidents are just one part of the anniversary celebration that also includes workshops, panel discussions, networking, and even a virtual evening gala.

More specifically:

**Brett Hart – United Airlines President:** Opening Session Speaker

In his role as United’s President, Mr. Hart Brett is responsible for leading the company’s external-facing functions including the government affairs, regulatory, corporate communications, advertising, market and community innovation, legal, global community engagement, and environmental sustainability teams. He also oversees business-critical functions such as the customer experience, corporate real estate, human resources, and labor relations teams.

Mr. Hart received his Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and English from the University of Michigan and a Juris Doctor from the University of Chicago Law School. He is married and has three sons. He is also a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity Inc. In February 2021, six Hampton University graduates were featured on the Today show representing a diverse class of pilots and airline professionals, who are reflective of the changes in the industry and are breaking the color barrier in a predominately white industry. United Captain Kyle Whitaker, said, “Before Hampton University, I had never seen a Black airline pilot, so if you can see it, you can achieve it. And we may not have seen it outside of us, but we could see it in each other.”

“We are grateful and over-the-moon excited for Mr. Hart to inspire our students in the same way the University inspired Captain Whitaker and all the other aviation students who came after him,” said Dr. Joyce Shirazi, Dean, School of Engineering and Technology.

“We are thrilled that Mr. Hart is able to speak. Our School is comprised of engineering, architecture, and aviation departments, so it is completely appropriate for Mr. Hart to serve as our opening event speaker,” said Dr. Demetris Geddis, Anniversary Event Co-Chair.

**Jay Alexander – Keysight Technologies Inc. Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer:** Evening Keynote Speaker

Mr. Alexander leads Keysight’s central strategy and technology development team to focus on addressing top opportunities and market trends. His role is to optimize Keysight resources to grow in areas that provide competitive advantage across the electronic design and test ecosystem and to leverage Keysight’s world-class technology and platform offerings.

Prior to Keysight, Mr. Alexander held numerous leadership positions within Agilent’s Electronic Resources and Labor Relations Teams.
Measurement Group, including serving as vice president and general manager and previously as R&D manager for the Oscilloscope and Protocol Division. Mr. Alexander earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Northwestern University and a master's degree in computer science from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He is a licensed professional engineer and a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). Alexander currently serves on the Visiting Committee on Advanced Technology for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). He holds 24 U.S. patents.

“Keysight is a true friend of our School of Engineering and Technology,” said Geddis.

“Their most recent in-kind gift of $550,000 in equipment has been critical to our being able to help our students advance and to ensure that they leave the University with the proper skill sets that set them apart and ensure they are industry-ready. We so appreciate of Keysight and are so incredibly excited that Jay will be joining us.”

For more information, visit https://gifttohamptons.org/engineering-25th/.

About United
United Airlines, Inc. (commonly referred to as United) is a major American airline headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. United operates a large domestic and international route network spanning cities large and small across the United States and all six continents. Measured by fleet size and the number of routes, it is the third-largest airline in the world. United’s mission statement is “to create an inclusive work environment, characterized by dignity and respect, that empowers every employee to serve the global marketplace and contribute to our success.” The statement shows how important the work environment at United Airlines is to its reputation. The company acknowledges that this is precisely what determines whether it will remain the yardstick for its competitors to emulate.

About Keysight Technologies
Keysight Technologies, Inc. (NYSE: KEYS) is a leading technology company that helps enterprises, service providers and governments accelerate innovation to connect and secure the world. Keysight’s solutions optimize networks and bring electronic products to market faster and at a lower cost with offerings from design simulation, to prototype validation, to manufacturing test, to optimization in networks and cloud environments. Customers span the worldwide communications ecosystem, aerospace and defense, automotive, energy, semiconductor, and general electronics end markets. Keysight generated revenues of $4.2B in fiscal year 2020. More information is available at www.keysight.com.

About KAI Enterprises
KAI Enterprises is a national design and build firm providing delivery-oriented building solutions with a diverse portfolio of experience, in-house multi-discipline professionals, and expertise in both design and construction delivery. Founded in 1980, KAI has grown into one of the largest minority-owned firms in the AEC industry. For nearly 40 years, KAI has been instrumental in transforming communities through its expertise in residential, commercial, K-12, higher education, healthcare, science and technology, aviation, mobility, sports and entertainment, government, water, and community-focused projects. KAI Enterprises is comprised of four distinct business units—KAI Design, KAI Engineering, KAI Build, and KAI 360 Construction Services.