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Furman to Hold Founders Convocation March 23

GREENVILLE, S.C.—Diversity leadership expert Juan Johnson will speak and receive one of two honorary degrees to be awarded at the Furman University Founders Convocation Tuesday, March 23 in McAlister Auditorium.

Johnson will speak on “Why Diversity is an Asset” at the 10 a.m. convocation, which is open to the public. He and genetics research pioneer Roger E. Stevenson, a Furman alumnus, will be awarded honorary degrees.

A graduate of Southern University, Johnson heads the Atlanta-based consulting firm Juan Johnson Consulting and Facilitation, LLC. As the Coca-Cola Company’s first vice president for diversity strategy, one of the youngest vice presidents in the history of the company, he helped Coca-Cola handle the settlement of a class-action racial discrimination lawsuit.

Johnson partnered with Furman’s Riley Institute to develop an innovative Diversity Leaders Initiative in South Carolina in 2003. Since the start of the initiative, there have been more than 600 graduates of the program across the state. Johnson will receive a Doctor of Humanities degree from Furman.

Stevenson, founding director of South Carolina’s Greenwood Genetic Center, is a national leader in the study and treatment of birth defects and developmental impairments. After graduating from Furman in 1962, he received his medical degree from Bowman Gray School of Medicine. As a research fellow at Johns Hopkins University, he began to dream of establishing a research center concentrating on intellectual disabilities, autism, birth defects and other disorders.

The Greenwood Genetic Center became a reality in 1974 and has become an internationally renowned research institute offering testing, evaluation and hope to thousands of families. Stevenson is a Founding Fellow of the American College of Medical Genetics. He has served on numerous boards and advisory panels, including the Science Advisory Committee for Furman’s Charles Townes Center for Science. Stevenson will receive the Doctor of Science degree from his alma mater.

Carol S. Daniels, coordinator of student services at Furman, will receive the Chiles-Harrill Award, becoming the first two-time recipient of that honor. Members of the senior class annually choose the winner, deemed to have had the greatest influence on the class. Daniels, who also won the award in 2000, is a 1982 graduate of Furman.

Maurice Bernard “Bobby” Morrow Jr., a 1951 graduate of Furman and retired Southern Baptist pastor, will receive the Richard Furman Baptist Heritage Award. Morrow is a former Furman trustee and alumni secretary, a past president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, a community volunteer and unofficial chaplain to a number of groups.

For more information, contact Furman’s News and Media Relations Office at (864) 294-3107.

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Juan Johnson