



APRIL 2023

VOLUME 2

THE PAW PRINT

2023 COMMENCEMENT EDITION



STEVIE BAGGS, JR.

*The Athlete - The Inspirational Speaker - The Author - The Entrepreneur
The Philanthropist - The Actor*

MAY 6, 2023 - 11:00 a.m.

The Grand Lawn - Front of the McCoy Administration Building



Rust College Announces

the

157th Commencement

Saturday, May Sixth, Two Thousand Twenty-Three

Eleven O'clock in the morning (CST)

The Grand Lawn in front of the McCoy Administration Building



SPEAKER

STEVIE BAGGS, JR.

**The Athlete - The Inspirational Speaker - The Author - The Entrepreneur
The Philanthropist - The Actor**

View Online:

Facebook: @RCBears1866

Simulcast: Rust College Radio Station WURC 88.1 FM

Website: www.rustcollege.edu

YouTube: www.youtube.com

(For the LIVE video, type in Rust College and look for the LIVE video of the Ceremony)

Dr. Ivy R. ... President



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

One Hundred Fifty-Seventh Commencement Exercises

Frequently Asked Questions

Commencement Ceremony

Date: Saturday, May 6th

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Venue/Location: “The Grand Lawn” on the campus of Rust College

We are delighted to announce that we plan to celebrate this year’s Commencement in-person and welcome family, guests, and the entire Rust College community. During the historic weekend, we will not only celebrate the Class of 2023, but we will also celebrate the Golden Anniversary Class of 1973, both Rust College and Mississippi Industrial, as well as the Silver Anniversary Class of 1998 (Rust College) respectively.

Question: What are the plans for the One Hundred Fifty-Seventh Commencement?

May 1-5, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Graduates pick-up academic regalia

Registrar’s office

May 4, 2023

Commencement Rehearsal (graduates)

7:00 p.m.

Lawn in front of the McCoy Administration Building

Friday, May 5

Senior Service of Blessing and Consecration

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Venue/Location: Doxey-Morehouse Auditorium

Class Photograph with President Taylor

6:30 p.m.

Immediately following the Consecration Service

Lawn in front of McCoy Administration Building

Graduation Reception

Date: Friday, May 5, 2023

Time: Immediately following Photograph

Alumni Registration & Robe Pickup

Date: Friday, May 5, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Frances Hathorne College Relations Center (Alumni Building)



Please contact the Interim Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Robert Dixon, PhD at rdixon@rustcollege.edu for additional information

Question: Are students required to attend exit counseling or secure other College clearances to participate in commencement?

Answer: Yes.

Senior Clearances Signature Cards will be issued to all prospective graduates beginning April 24th in the Office of the Registrar. You must submit the completed clearance card to the Office of the Registrar to retrieve your graduation tickets and academic regalia. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

Exit Interview with President Taylor: The mass exit interview with President Ivy R. Taylor will occur immediately following the rehearsal on May 4th. The meeting will take place in the Doxey-Morehouse Auditorium. The interview with the President is mandatory. The meeting will also include a representative from the Rust College International Alumni Association.

Financial Aid / Loan Exit Counseling: Counseling begins on April 7th and will continue until April 21st. Please visit www.studentaid.gov. For more information, please contact Benita Marion Ivy at bivy@rustcollege.edu. Mrs. Ivy will be happy to assist you with completing this crucial step with the United States Department of Education.

Career Services “Beyond the Bachelor’s Counseling”: Please arrange a time to confer with the Career Planning & Development Office prior to graduation to ensure that you are registered with the Handshake database to learn about job opportunities and to receive assistance with refining your resume. Please contact Ms. Dina Givens at dngivens@rustcollege.edu or visit the Career Planning and Development Office on the second floor of the Administrative Building between April 10th – May 1st.

Housing Clearance: Graduating seniors will have until Monday, May 8th by 12 noon to move out and complete the check – out process. Residents are required to use the app “BookedIn” to schedule an appointment to have your room checked on the day you plan to check out of the residence hall. Residents must turn in their key and vacate the residence hall at that time. Also, you have the option to set up an appointment directly with your hall director. All residents who fail to checkout properly and turn in a key will be charged a fine of \$50.

Question: How do I order my cap and gown?

Answer: The Office of the Registrar has already ordered graduation caps, gowns, tassels based on the information that you provided on your graduation application. Students may retrieve their caps, gowns, and tassels from the Office of the Registrar in the Administrative Building from May 1st – May 5th between 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Library Clearance: Please go to the library starting on April 24th to be cleared of any book fines. You will need to speak to Ms. Wanda Pegues, and she will direct you in what to do next.

Question: Is graduation a ticketed event? Are children allowed to attend?

Answer: This is your day! Students are allowed to invite as many family members and friends, including children, as they want. However, each graduate will receive four tickets guaranteeing access to premium seating. We will reserve special seating near the stage. You may retrieve your tickets upon picking up your cap and gown in the Office of the Registrar. Guests without tickets are allowed to sit in the general admission seating area on “The Great Lawn.” These seats will be available on a first – come, first – serve basis. Guests are encouraged to arrive as early as 9:00 a.m. The College made the calculated decision to host commencement in an outdoor setting to ensure compliance with existing COVID – 19 protocols. We cannot predict the weather conditions despite our best efforts. We will provide waterproof ponchos at no cost to guests should it rain during the ceremony.

Question: Will the College provide official graduation pictures?

Answer: Yes. The College has hired a professional photographer to capture the memorable pictures from the ceremony. Additional information will be provided about how to obtain the images from the graduation.

Question: I have not satisfied all academic requirements necessary to graduate. Am I allowed to participate in Commencement?

Answer: That will be a decision for the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Robert Dixon. Please contact his office.

Question: Can I owe a balance and be allowed to participate in Commencement?

Answer: No. All balances must be cleared with the Business Office by end-of-day on April 26, 2023.

Question: How do I retrieve my diploma?

Answer: Students will receive their degree covers during the ceremony. The actual degree can be picked up immediately after the Commencement Convocation on the first floor of the McCoy Administration building. Please enter through the side door near Gross Hall, retrieve your degree, and exit the building through the end door near the plaza.

Question: Am I allowed to decorate my graduation cap (mortarboard)?

Answer: Yes. Students may retrieve mortarboards from the office of the Registrar as early as April 25th. The mortarboard cannot contain any advertisement, symbols, abbreviations, initials, words, slogans, patches or pictures that refer to drugs or controlled substances, tobacco, alcohol, or weapons or be of a sexual nature; Denote an affiliation with gangs or which advocate drug use, violence, illegal activity, or disruptive behavior which is detrimental to the safety and welfare of other students; Be obscene, profane, vulgar, or lewd; Include numbers other than graduation year; Only flat, top area of the mortarboard may be decorated. Please note that decorations must be flat on the surface of the cap, 3-D creations are prohibited. Mortarboards that violate this policy will be confiscated for the duration of the ceremony. Confiscated mortarboards will be returned to graduates after the ceremony. Men remove their mortarboards for the invocation and again during the benediction. Women do not remove their mortarboards. If you are a graduating senior who wants Ms. Tanya Kelly Kirk to decorate your mortarboard you will have to contact her directly.

Question: What is the proper attire to wear beneath my academic regalia?

Answer: Students should dress in appropriate attire under their academic regalia. It is suggested that men wear dress slacks, a button – up shirt and tie; women may wear either dress slacks and a blouse or a day dress.

Question: Am I required to participate in graduation rehearsal?

Answer: Yes. Students who do not attend graduation rehearsal may not be permitted to participate in commencement. We will have one graduation rehearsal at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 4th.

Question: Will Rust College livestream the commencement via YouTube or other social media platforms?

Answer: Yes. We will stream the commencement via the Rust College platforms below.

YouTube: RustCollege

Facebook: @rcbearcats1866

Simulcast: Rust College Radio Station WURC 88.1 FM

Website: www.rustcollege.edu

ESTD
1866

COMMENCEMENT PARKING

The front entrance to campus on Rust Avenue will be closed to all traffic. Access to campus can be gained only through the back gates. The Highway 78 traffic will enter through the gate near the BCS building. The Randolph Street traffic will come through the physical plant gate.

Parking is available:

- ◆ Gross and Davage-Smith Hall parking lots
- ◆ Front of the BCS building
- ◆ Behind the Leontyne Price Library
- ◆ Front of the McMillan Multi-Purpose building (gym)
- ◆ E. L. Rust Hall parking lot
- ◆ Behind the Mass Communications Center (cafeteria)
- ◆ Behind the Beckley Conference Center

OVERFLOW PARKING will be available on the Mississippi Industrial College campus.

HSPD and Rust College Safety and Compliance Officers will be on-site to assist with parking and traffic flow.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ACADEMICS

The **Division of Mathematics and Science** partnered with the Illinois Institute of Technology, the Office of Career Services and the Office of Admissions and Recruitment to present a discussion featuring mathematicians as part of a series for RUST students to hear from professionals discussing the skills and education needed for success in their chosen fields.. To view, click on the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/RCBEARCATS1866/videos/891644388579699>

RUST COLLEGE WHAT'S NEXT? PROFESSIONAL LECTURE SERIES



**Barry K. Williams,
COL (Ret.)**

is an RC alum and entrepreneur. He was commissioned as an active-duty Second Lieutenant through the Army ROTC Program. COL (Ret.) Williams' achievements come from his knowledge, skills, and abilities to plan strategically, build teams, and work with others.



Kimberly Wright, M.S.

is an RC alum and Senior Engineer at NASA, presently serving as Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) Information Technology (IT) Investment Manager with leadership responsibilities of over 100 business and financial management civil service personnel.



**Julienne Kabre,
Ph.D.**

is an IIT alum and an assistant professor of mathematics at NSU. She served as a research associate with the Air Force Institute of Technology in Dayton Ohio and the as teaching and research postdoc fellow with Baylor University.



Patrick Hamilton

is an IIT alum and is an actuarial analyst at Aon. We analyze market trends, use economic modeling tools, and help broker deals between reinsurers and mortgage firms seeking credit risk security.



**Rodrigo Rodriguez,
Ph.D.**

is an IIT alum and Quantitative Strategist for Wells Fargo Securities working for the Counterparty Credit Valuation Adjustment Trading Desk . His family is originally from Mexico and his PhD is in Applied Math.

The Division of Mathematics and Science partnering with Illinois Institute of Technology, the Office of Career Services and the Office of Admissions and Recruitment present this discussion featuring mathematicians as part of a series for RUST students to hear from professionals discussing the skills and education needed for success in their chosen fields.

**WEDNESDAY
APRIL 19**
NOON CST | via FB Live

RUST COLLEGE



ILLINOIS TECH

College of Computing



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ACADEMICS

Rust College Senior Shawn Hannah, Named the BSW Student of The Year



Shawn Hannah, a graduating senior, social work major, has been named the 2023 BSW Student of the Year.

Annually, one student from each accredited social work program in the state is nominated to receive the NASW-Mississippi Social Work Student of the Year Award. Each student is recognized for outstanding academic achievement, commitment to the Code of Ethics, leadership on and off campus, political and legislative engagement, and contribution to a positive image of the social work profession. She was honored at a ceremony on March 23rd in Jackson, MS.

Ms. Hannah was bestowed this honor from among her peers from BSW colleges and universities across Mississippi. “She has been an outstanding student during her tenure at Rust College. I have known Mrs. Hannah over the past 3 years, as her professor, advisor and as Chair of the Social Work Department. She is dedicated to the field of social work and consistently exhibits the utmost respect for clients, teachers, students, and her community. She takes her education seriously,” said Department Chair Debra Butler.



The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards for social workers, and to advance sound social policies.

Rust College Professor Emeritus Receives Social Work Pioneer Award

The National Association of Social Workers – Mississippi Chapter has named Rust College Professor Emeritus Dr. Gemma Beckley, a Social Work Pioneer.

The NASW Social Work Pioneer Program recognizes those who have contributed to the evolution and enrichment of social work and who serve as role models for future generations of social workers. Beckley was among those individuals honored at the 41st Annual Conference, March 23 – 24, 2023, in Jackson, MS.



Dr. Beckley is a well-read and well-traveled scholar who has provided a wealth of knowledge and skill to the field of social work at Rust College and across several other colleges and universities including studying abroad. She retired from the position of chair and teaching in the social work department in 2020 after having served in those positions a combination of over 30 years.

Dr. Beckley is truly a social work pioneer and a trailblazer in the truest sense. When others say it can't be done, she says, “oh yes it can, and I will,” said Division Chair Debra Butler.

Beckley has been the initiator of “**first**” in several ventures. While at Rust College, she took the lead in the accreditation process of the Social Work Program in 2000. The program has been continually reaffirmed since then. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Rust College **first** Social Service Agency - the Families First Resource Center, funded by the Mississippi Department of Human Services. This center serves as a hands-on experiential learning laboratory for students.

ATHLETICS' AWARDS RECEPTION



ATHLETICS' AWARDS RECEPTION



HONORS & AWARDS ASSEMBLY 2023



ALPHA KAPPA MU HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION



Alpha Kappa Mu Honors Society Invites You to their

NEW MEMBER INDUCTION CEREMONY

THURSDAY, APRIL 20
3:00PM
Rust College

Doxey Alumni Fine Arts Communications Center
Morehouse Auditorium
150 Rust Avenue
Holly Springs, MS 38635





Complete the

National Survey of Student Engagement

by May 14, 2023

STEP
01



Visit
nsse.survey.org

Select



"don't know your login ID"

STEP
02



STEP
03

Complete

easy, one-step verification
process to log in

More information about NSSE is at

<https://nsse.indiana.edu/nsse/about-nsse/index.html>.

If you have any questions about this project at Rust College or how we plan to use the results, please contact Tiffani Perry, Vice President for Student Engagement at tperry@rustcollege.edu.

CONGRATULATIONS BEARCATS!!!!

Congratulations to the 2023 GCAC Baseball Regular Season Champions! The Bearcats swept the series against Oakwood Sunday afternoon to notch the No. 1 seed in the 2023 Hope Credit Union GCAC Baseball Championship.

Ready to see the Bearcats in action in Jackson? Make sure to visit the GCAC site: www.gcaconf.com to purchase your tickets!

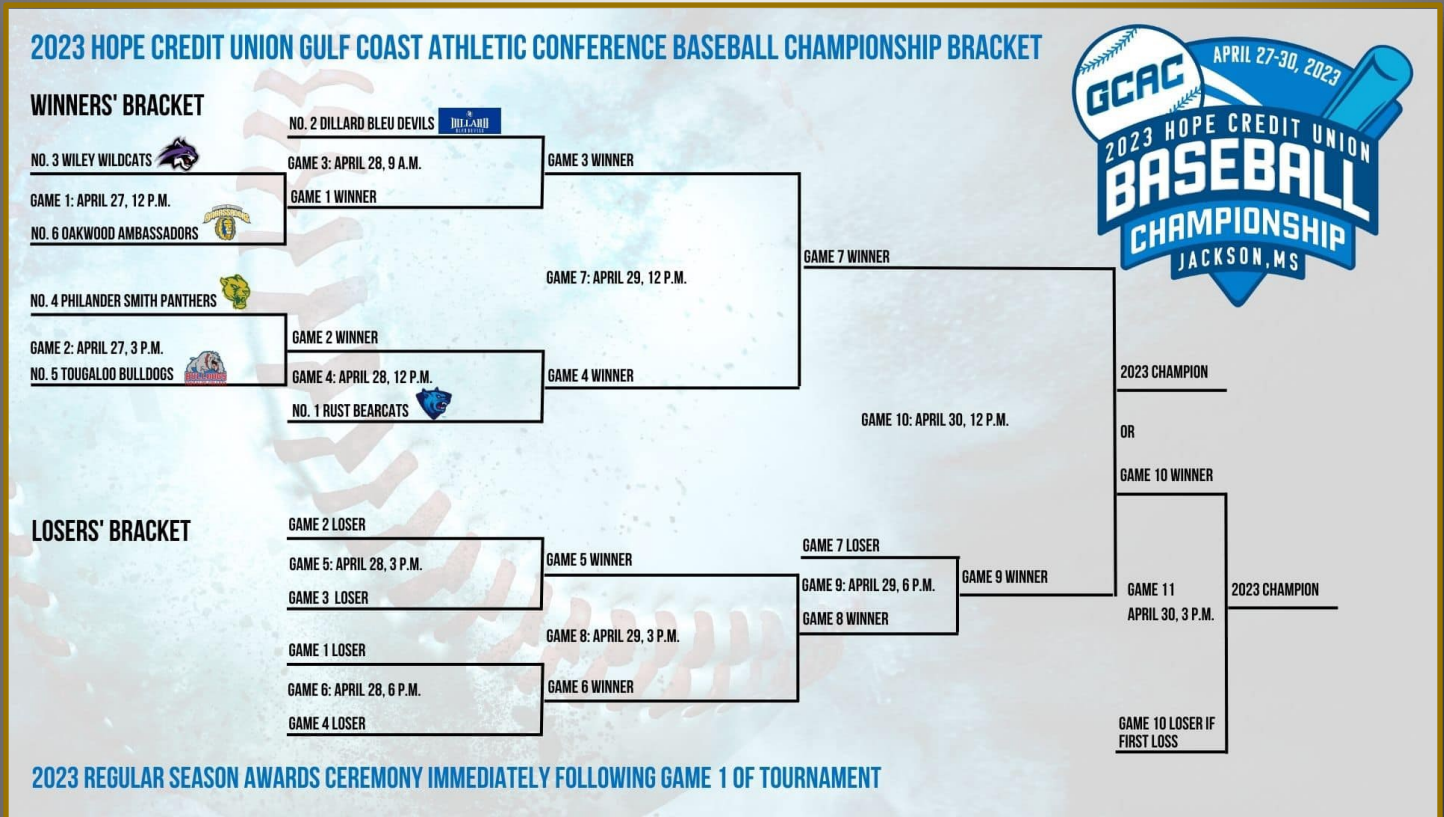


The image features a celebratory banner for the 2023 GCAC Baseball Regular Season Champions. At the top, the GCAC logo is displayed in blue with a white underline, set against a background of falling gold confetti. Below the logo, the text "2023 GCAC BASEBALL REGULAR SEASON CHAMPIONS" is written in large, bold, blue capital letters. Underneath the text is a group photograph of the Rust Bearcats baseball team and their coaches, posed on a baseball field. The team members are wearing blue and white uniforms. At the bottom of the banner, there is a blue horizontal bar with the team name "RUST BEARCATS" in white, bold, capital letters. On either side of this bar is a blue silhouette of a bear's head, the team's mascot.

CHAMPIONS...

We are days away from the 2023 Hope Credit Union GCAC Baseball Championship in Jackson, MS at Hank Aaron Sports Academy!

Make sure to take a look at this year's UPDATED bracket and also visit our site: www.gcaconf.com to purchase your tickets today



PRESIDENT AND ALUMNI ON THE ROAD

President Ivy R. Taylor joins alumni, Dr. Leslie McLemore and Chris Snell at the Dedication of the Fannie Lou Hamer Plaque in Kilmichael, MS. Also attending the event was Civil Rights Activist James Meredith.



RUST ON THE ROAD...CENTRAL U. M. CHURCH



By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them

#RUSTGRADS23



The #RUSTGRADS23 Campaign is a celebration and appreciation of years of hard work, commitment, and accomplishments of every graduating senior student in the Class of 2023. This campaign encourages all current graduating seniors, and all Rust College alums and friends to give \$20.23 in celebration of the momentous occasion. Your Class Gift is an opportunity to leave a **lasting and impactful legacy** for students coming behind to ensure they have the tools and access to achieve their own success.

WHY THIS CAMPAIGN IS IMPORTANT FOR RUST COLLEGE?

Every college or university across the country, regardless of size, depends heavily on “philanthropic giving” to help bridge gaps in critical resources that tuition alone cannot provide. Giving from students, alumni, parents, faculty & staff, and friends helps to provide those needed resources. All donations go towards Rust College’s annual fund and allows the institution to invest in providing support in academics, facilities, and any other student-centered institutional priorities.

HOW CAN MY SMALL “GIFT” MAKE AN IMPACT?

There is strength when many come together for good! Very few individuals have the financial means to give significantly large gifts. This makes it necessary to engage as many individuals as possible to come together with smaller gifts that can add up to provide great impact. Participation is **KEY** and will communicate to other funders that when it comes to your alma mater, **YOU ARE ALL IN!**

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

For graduating seniors, as a #RUSTGRADS23 donor, you will be invited to a private reception with the graduation speaker, Mr. Stevie Baggs Jr. and you will also receive a philanthropy cord to wear during Commencement. This will be a symbol of your celebratory commitment to your soon-to-be alma mater for all that you have accomplished during your journey at Rust College! All alumni and friend donors who give to the campaign will receive mention in the next Sentinel magazine (Fall 2023).

More importantly, you will be “paying it forward” for students following in your footsteps who will need the financial support to achieve their hopes and dreams – the same support that you received, whether you were aware of it or not, from those who came before you.

MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TODAY!

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/RUSTGRADS23](https://tinyurl.com/rustgrads23)





THE PAW PRINT



A WEEKLY DIGEST OF RUST COLLEGE CAMPUS NEWS

PUBLIC RELATIONS/FACILITY REQUEST SUBMISSIONS

Requests for use of facilities, printed/digital materials, webpage edits/additions, social media posts, flyers and all other digital marketing campaigns MUST be submitted at least 10 days in advance to ensure adequate timing for changes and execution.



STAY CONNECTED!



By Their Fruits, Ye Shall Know Them

Dr. Ivy R. Taylor
President

Mrs. Tiffani Perry
Vice President for Institutional Advancement & Transformation Officer

Ms. Mary LeSueur
Executive Director of Public Relations

Mr. Gino Peterson, *Digital Media Manager*
Mr. Torres Bell, Blackboard Administrator
Photographers

Mrs. Naomi Taylor
Executive Administrative Assistant

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