



Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

Tallahassee, Florida 32307-3100

Excellence With Caring

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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October 4, 2021

Sydney Kitson, Chair
Board of Governors
State University System of Florida
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1614
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Re: Confirmation of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University President Larry Robinson's, Ph.D. Contract Extension

Dear Chair Kitson:

On September 16, 2021, the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) Board of Trustees unanimously approved a one-year contract extension for Larry Robinson, Ph.D., to serve as the University President.

FAMU continues to make tremendous strides under Dr. Larry Robinson's leadership. Earlier this year we opened the long-awaited Center of Access and Student Success allowing us for the first time in years to consolidate our essential student services into one facility. In the fall of 2020, we welcomed students to a new 700-bed residence hall, FAMU Towers and an adjacent dining hub was opened for students' convenience in 2021. We are also looking forward to the ribbon-cutting and unveiling of our student and donor funded Amphitheater which will be used for a variety of outdoor activities. In fact, FAMU was recognized by Cosmopolitan Magazine as the 25th most beautiful campus in America in 2020.

It has been Dr. Robinson's keen focus on students and their success at FAMU that best characterize his impact on the University. Most notably, the average cost to students dropped from \$7,640 in 2017-2018, to \$2370 in 2019-2020. The four-year graduation rate increased from 27.7% to 34.6% in the last two cohorts, and with an 11.1% increase in our academic progress rate to 82.2% in the past year, we envision even more student success outcomes in the future. Our overall success on student outcomes resulted in our highest score ever in the performance-based funding model.

Dr. Robinson has held over 85 engagements with corporate partners and has increased the number of Industry Cluster program members from 19 to 33 during the past year. Major partnerships were established with Google, Merck, Novartis and Thermo Fisher to name a few. As a direct result this success, FAMU had its best year ever in donations, totaling \$12.7 million in 2020-2021. Our faculty had 167 research grants funded bringing in awards totaling \$60.8

million in 2019-20, the largest dollar value of research awards in our history. This record was exceeded again in 2020-21, with 175 grants awarded to faculty with a value of \$66.4 million.

Dr. Robinson should be commended for how he led FAMU's respond and adaption to the COVID-19 pandemic. A successful plan was developed and implemented that included full consideration of the safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff while allowing academic, service and business operations to be maintained and the reintegration of on-campus activities and athletics to occur seamlessly in the current environment. Dr. Robinson's efforts extended beyond our internal constituents as evidenced by the establishment of an on-campus community based COVID-19 testing site that has administered over 488,000 tests and a vaccination site that has served nearly 18,000 citizens.

Dr. Robinson has elevated FAMU as a national leader on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic appearing on several national, regional and local programs including: MSNBC, Cox Media Group, Yahoo News, the Black News Channel and LinkedIn News and the Broward County Chapter of the Links, Inc. He has been interviewed and quoted by the Washington Post, The New York Times, Politico, The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Wall Street Journal and Diversity Issues in Higher Education, to name a few.

Finally, additional evidence of Dr. Robinson's leadership is conveyed by the U.S. News & World Report "Best Colleges" 2022 rankings listing FAMU as the highest-ranked Public HBCU in the nation (for the third consecutive year), and moving up thirteen places to number 104 among the Top Public Universities. The FAMU-FSU College of Engineering remained on the badge-eligible list, among the Best Undergraduate Engineering schools offering doctorate degrees and is second best engineering program in the State of Florida. Perhaps more importantly, FAMU is ranked Number 13 among all colleges and universities in social mobility moving up seven places from number 20 a year ago. FAMU is second in the State University System of Florida in this metric behind Florida International University (FIU). This ranking is the truest indicator of our ability to alter the economic trajectory of our students and their families, especially since more than 60 percent of our students are Pell Grant recipients.

All remaining contract terms are unchanged and are compliant with state laws, including statutory provisions governing compensation, termination, and severance.

In accordance with the Board of Governors Regulation 1.00 (5)(c), the FAMU BOT respectfully requests the Board of Governor's confirmation of Dr. Robinson as President of the University. Please contact me or the University's General Counsel, Denise Wallace, if we can answer any questions or provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Kelvin Lawson, Chair
Florida A&M University Board of Trustees

cc: Marshall Criser, III, Chancellor, State University System of Florida
Vickie Shirley, General Counsel, BOG
Larry Robinson, Ph.D., FAMU