

APRIL 2024

GREETINGS ALL AGGIE ALUMNI,

I write to you today to issue a call to **ACTION** for a great cause, for a compelling reason and for a critical time and season for two people who are most deserving. We rise now to **celebrate** and **thank** Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. and Mrs. Davida Wagner Martin for 15 years of incredible service as he retires on June 30 of this year.

This momentous occasion will take place **May 18, 2024, 6 p.m.**, at the Grandover Resort and Conference Center. This is a party with a **purpose**, a goal that is within our capacity and capability to make happen. Our intent is to raise **\$2 million** to honor the Martins and to create a legacy that pays tribute to their extraordinary contributions to our alma mater. Please consider donating to:

- **The Harold L. Martin, Sr. Endowed Professorship in Engineering. Goal: \$1 million**
- **The Harold L. Martin Sr. & Davida Wagner Martin Legacy Endowed Scholarship. Goal: \$1 million**



Over the past 15 years, the Martins have represented the University with grace, class and distinction. Chancellor Martin has been a transformative leader for North Carolina A&T State University. As a former Board of Trustee member and former Board Chair, I had an inside view of the University's standing when Chancellor Martin took over in 2009. We were in the early stages of the Great Recession. The University was not on firm footing. We faced declining enrollment, an uncertain financial future, a dated academic organization and athletic endeavors that fell far short of our expectations.

Look at us today.

We are the largest HBCU in the nation, and by many measures, its best and most impactful, graduating more Black engineers and agricultural scientists than any U.S. university, and the second most Black graduates in Journalism/Communications and Liberal Arts.

We are financially sound and thriving. In 2009 our endowment stood at **~\$20 million**; today we are at **\$175 million**. We raised over **\$181 million** in our most recent capital campaign, the largest such effort ever executed by a public HBCU.

We attract the most talented students in the history of the University, with out-of-state applicants applying with an average GPA of 4.1, and off-the-charts success for our large and growing career fairs.

And we became the gold standard for HBCU athletics from 2010-2020, with track athletes winning three Olympic medals in the 2020 games and our football program winning four Black college football national championships.

WHY

Endowed Professorships allow us to recruit and retain exceptional faculty scholars, world-class researchers and outstanding teachers. Faculty hired through the Martin Endowed Professorship in Engineering will inspire and mentor the next generation of engineers, who are critical to solving the real-world challenges faced by an increasingly technology driven society. Faculty research drives innovation and applied solutions and will enable our attainment of R1 status, the highest achievement for colleges and universities.

Endowed Scholarships empower students to pursue their dreams, regardless of financial condition and constraints. Your contribution will directly impact the educational journey of young scholars and change the trajectory of their lives and, in turn, the lives of their families. In closing, can we just talk for a minute, Aggie to Aggie? Yes, we're having a party to **thank and celebrate** Chancellor Harold and First Lady Davida Martin. With your strong support, we will raise **\$2 million** for an endowed professorship and an endowed scholarship to honor their commitment to higher education, research, diversity, community uplift and excellence. One hundred years from now, students and professors will still be benefiting from the gifts we give today.

So please, give generously. No gift is too large or too small. **One hundred percent** of your gift will be tax deductible and **100 percent** of your gift will go directly to the professorship or scholarship, as expenses for the event have been entirely underwritten. These gifts will also be eligible for federal Title III matching, dramatically enhancing their impact. Every alumnus is invited to **participate**. Every year at Homecoming, we spend with the notion of having a great time -- and we do. This time, let's invest with a different goal in mind: to thank and celebrate the Martins with a gift that will live forever.

We can do this, let's do this, let's show that AGGIE PRIDE is more than just a slogan. It's time to **DO. It's a Fundraiser, y'all!**

With Aggie Pride,

Willie A. Deese

Class of 1977

Past Chair of the Board of Trustees

