



April 18, 2022

The Honorable Trent Kelly  
2243 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Kelly:

As you know Rust College, located in Holly Springs, Mississippi, is one of the nation's oldest Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) and the first HBCU established in Mississippi. Rust College is located in our Historical Downtown and is a vital partner to Holly Springs Main Street Chamber. This letter is in support of Rust College's FY 2023 Community Project Funding request to enhance the E. A. Smith Honors College program.

Rust College has long been a vital force in promoting educational opportunity, social progress, and economic vitality within Marshall County and surrounding areas. Now, with the recent installment of Dr. Ivy R. Taylor as the 12th President of Rust College and the first woman to lead the institution, the College is on a path of accelerated progress to advance educational and workforce opportunities that elevate economic prosperity and meet critical needs across the state.

Dr. Ernest Andrew Smith, the ninth president of Rust College was a wholehearted believer in the value of education. He led the college for ten years and is remembered as a leader who put student learning first. Rust College has set core priorities to promote education and workforce development in the region, including the envisioned expansion of leadership development programming within the E. A. Smith Honors College. Through this pathway, students will be equipped to be leaders in scholastic achievement, continue their education through graduate and professional school, and launch careers in business, civil service, education, healthcare, legal practice, media, and other leadership roles.

The E. A. Smith Honors program is designed to train tomorrow's scholars, professionals, practitioners, and leaders who make a difference in their communities and around the world. A signature feature of the E. A. Smith Honors Program is the incorporation of research, scholarship, leadership development and enrichment opportunities that better prepare Rust College students to fill key roles in a variety of disciplines including business, education, healthcare, social work, and local civic leadership.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of Rust College's requests for funding of the E.A. Smith Honors Program.

Sincerely,

Christy Owens  
Executive Director  
Holly Springs Main Street Chamber



MARSHALL-BENTON COUNTIES  
RUST/MI ALUMNI CLUB

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Sincerely,

Mary Kincaide-Bibbs c/o '91, Alumni Club President

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P.O. BOX 5521 Holly Springs, MS 38635  
662-216-3228  
Email: [marshallbentonalumni1@gmail.com](mailto:marshallbentonalumni1@gmail.com)



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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE  
VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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April 18, 2022

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Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of Rust College's request for funding of the E.A. Smith Honors Program.

Sincerely,

Rolundus R. Rice, Ph.D.

Vice President for Academic Affairs