

By Senator Powell

24-03339A-24

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Senate Resolution

A resolution designating February 21, 2024, as "FAMU Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), this state's only public Historically Black College and University (HBCU), was founded on October 3, 1887, was named a land grant institution in 1891, was designated a college in 1909, and was designated a university in 1953, and

WHEREAS, academic components of the university consist of 98 undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate, and professional degree programs offered through seven colleges and seven schools, including the colleges of Agriculture and Food Sciences; Education; Engineering; Law; Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; Science and Technology; and Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities; and the schools of Allied Health Sciences; Architecture and Engineering Technology; Business and Industry; the Environment; Graduate Studies and Research; Journalism and Graphic Communication; and Nursing, and

WHEREAS, under the dedicated leadership of FAMU's 12th president, Larry Robinson, Ph.D., and the FAMU Board of Trustees and university faculty and staff, FAMU rose in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2023-2024 "Top 100" National Public Universities rankings from 103rd just a year ago to 91st; ranks 21st on the latest Social Mobility Index; remains the highest-ranked public HBCU for the fifth consecutive year; and is ranked third among all public and private HBCUs in the country, and

WHEREAS, with more than 9,200 enrolled students from 24 different countries, FAMU experienced a record number of

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30 applications for the 2023-2024 academic year, exceeding 23,800
31 in a single year, with nearly 21,000 first-time-in-college
32 applicants, and

33 WHEREAS, FAMU continues to elevate student success through
34 retention, graduation rates, and degree productivity, awarding
35 nearly 2,500 degrees since the 2022-2023 academic year, and

36 WHEREAS, in 2024, FAMU launched its immersive virtual
37 metaverse world, The Rattliverse, the first official metaverse
38 for an HBCU, within Meta Horizon Worlds, offering futuristic
39 opportunities to explore FAMU's campus, culture, and current
40 events, and

41 WHEREAS, FAMU maintains its commitment to invaluable
42 research, as evidenced by faculty and staff who reported a
43 record year in research awards in 2023, including a multi-year
44 grant with the United States Department of Transportation to
45 lead a consortium and establish a new Tier One University
46 Transportation Center; a grant from the United States Department
47 of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency for the FAMU
48 Florida Small Business Development Center to establish the
49 Florida Panhandle Capital Readiness Collaborative across 12
50 counties to assist aspiring entrepreneurs; and a grant from
51 Google aimed at bolstering research capabilities in artificial
52 intelligence in the fields of computer science and computer
53 information systems, all of which signify a substantial
54 investment in advancing the academic and professional
55 opportunities available to FAMU students, empowering them to
56 excel in cutting-edge technology and innovation, and

57 WHEREAS, the College of Agriculture and Food Sciences
58 Professors Lambert Kanga, Ph.D., and Odemari Mbuya, Ph.D., were

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59 awarded grants in 2023 for their research in, respectively,
60 "Developing the Next Generation of Minority Leaders in Pest
61 Management for Agriculture and Food in a Changing Climate" and
62 industrial hemp and chestnuts, which are considered to be
63 economically viable and climate-smart crop options, and

64 WHEREAS, the dynamic FAMU Concert Choir excited audiences
65 around Europe while on tour in Vienna, Austria, in late 2023
66 after receiving an invitation to be a part of the 2023 Festival
67 Tour of Vienna Sings, and

68 WHEREAS, with 14 National Collegiate Athletic Association
69 programs, 2023 was a stellar year of champions for FAMU
70 Athletics as the FAMU Women's tennis team won the Southwestern
71 Athletic Conference (SWAC) championship, the baseball team won
72 its first SWAC baseball tournament championship, the women's
73 cross-country team won its first SWAC championship in its second
74 year of membership, and, after dedicating the football field at
75 Bragg Memorial Stadium to Ken Riley, an alumnus and professional
76 football Hall of Famer, the football team won its first SWAC and
77 Cricket Celebration Bowl HBCU National Championship titles, and

78 WHEREAS, FAMU honors the life and legacy of Barbara A.
79 Cohen-Pippin, who built a career spanning more than 40 years,
80 fulfilling pivotal roles in higher education and legislative
81 affairs, and who came out of retirement to become director of
82 government relations at FAMU, where her many accomplishments
83 include leading the legislative effort to allocate construction
84 funding for the Center for Access and Student Success and
85 securing a program modification to facilitate construction of
86 FAMU Towers, which will benefit students for decades to come,
87 NOW, THEREFORE,

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89 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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91 That in recognition of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical
92 University's contributions as an outstanding institution of
93 higher education, February 21, 2024, is designated as "FAMU Day"
94 in Florida.

95 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
96 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Larry Robinson,
97 Ph.D., President of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical
98 University, as a tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida
99 Senate.