

A Biographical Profile of Dr. David Holmes Swinton

Dr. David Holmes Swinton is the 13th president of Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina. As president, Dr. Swinton oversees all areas and departments of the 139-year-old Institution with student enrollment that exceeds 2,800.

Benedict College's enrollment has more than doubled since the arrival of Dr. Swinton in 1994. The College has experienced a dramatic increase in its male student populations going against the national trend of recruiting African-American males scholars. As a result of this tremendous growth, Benedict has one of the largest undergraduate populations of the 20 private institutions in South Carolina, and has been ranked the fourth largest HBCU in The College Fund/UNCF network.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, Dr. Swinton moved with his family to Timmonsville, South Carolina at an early age where he attended the Brockington School. He moved to New York City at 12 years of age and graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in Brooklyn. In 1968, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from New York University; in 1971, he was awarded a Master of Arts degree in Economics from Harvard University; and in 1975 he was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Economics from Harvard University.

Dr. Swinton is recognized for his academic achievements, his intellectual excellence, and his devotion to higher education. Dr. Swinton's professional experience includes seven-year tenure as Dean of the School of Business at Jackson State University where he led the successful effort to gain AACSB accreditation for the Business School. Prior to his appointment at Jackson State, he was Director of the Southern Center of Studies in Public Policy and Professor of Economics at Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Swinton is renowned for his scholarly writings; most notably his analysis of the economic status of African Americans, which has been published in the National Urban League's *The State of Black America*. His works have also been published in such professional journals as the *American Economics Review*, *The Review of Black Political Economy*, *Minority Youth Employment*, *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Urban Analysis*, and *Business and Society*. In 2005, Dr. Swinton's received the *Samuel Z. Westerfield Award* by the National Economic Association of African American Economist. The award is presented to African-American economists who have an outstanding record in the economics profession, institutional leadership and service to the community. In 2007, Dr. Swinton was inducted into the *South Carolina Black Hall of Fame*.

In 1998, Dr. Swinton became the first African-American Chairman of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce Board in the organization's 92-year history. In 1999, Dr. Swinton helped organize a group of 50 investors to create South Carolina Community Bank, to preserve the only minority-owned bank in South Carolina. Dr. Swinton has served as Economic Advisor to the National Urban League since 1980, and has been a member of *Black Enterprise Magazine's* Board of Economists since 1990. His honors and awards include *Phi Beta Kappa*, *Coat of Arms Society*, and *Honors in Economics from New York University*, *Ford Foundation Fellow*, *Graduate Prize Fellowship from*

Harvard, the *Order of the Palmetto*, and an *Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters* for the University of Bridgeport. Recently, he received the *Luther Wesley Smith Award* for distinguished service in strengthening college or seminary programs.

Dr. Swinton believes that students at Benedict are the school's most valued constituents and its most important product. To help ensure their success, he revised the student advising system and instituted a comprehensive retention program. The College has been named one of the *Top Ten Producers of Physics Bachelor's Degrees among African Americans in the United States*, and was ranked the number two in the nation in for the past three years by the American Institute of Physics. Under Dr. Swinton's direction, the emphasis on the educational programs has led to the improvement of student performance and infusion of state-of-the-art computer technology throughout the campus.

Under Dr. Swinton's leadership several programs have received national accreditations including The Recreation and Leisure Services Program which received accreditation from the National Recreation and Park and The Office of Teacher Education was accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) along with the Environmental Health Science Program which was accredited by the National Environmental Health and Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC). Additionally the national accreditation for the Colleges Social Work Department and the Benedict College Child Development Center were renewed. As for the extracurricular aspect, Dr. Swinton returned the Tiger football program after a 29-year absence, revived the marching band, as well as started a new golf and tennis program.

Since assuming the presidency of Benedict College, he has led an impressive program to improve the academic and physical environment of the College. He has overseen the restoration of two of the College's historical landmarks-- Morgan and Pratt Halls, the renovation of several existing buildings, and the acquisition of land for future expansion. A new 45,000 square foot state-of-the-art student center, along with a new male dormitory, a 350-bed Honors Dormitory, a 230-bed upperclassmen dormitory and a 300-space parking facility have also been added to the scenic campus as well as over 80 acres of land.

Under his direction the college has implemented the first of three phases to develop a multi-million-dollar state-of-the-art sports complex, which features a 11,000-seat football stadium as its centerpiece. Situated on a newly acquired 60 acres of land, the complex will also include an outdoor track, baseball and softball fields, tennis courts, a soccer field, and a football practice field. To the amazement of the community, Dr. Swinton turned a troublesome "honky-tonk" after hour's club into a modern community Health and Fitness Center.

The College completed the construction of its first Administration building in July, 2001. In 2003, the College also opened the gates to a charming Community Park featuring a children's play area along with tennis and basketball courts adjacent to the College's Honor's Dormitory. In 2006, Benedict renovated and open new facility to house the new Continuing Education- Evening and Weekend Programs. Through several federal grants he has initiated the renovation of several dilapidated houses in the community and is currently to building a Small Business Development Center to support economic growth in the Columbia's Midlands community.

Along with the physical development of the College's surrounding community, Dr. Swinton has been instrumental in administering the College's community development programs as well.

With programs such as the Department of Labor's Welfare-to-Work, it enables Benedict College to create partnerships with local businesses and provide jobs and training to program participants.

Among other programs is the Freddie Mac Initiative, which has two major goals: to provide Freddie Mac with information concerning racial minorities' perceptions of credit and to improve the credit worthiness of African Americans. In 2008, the Benedict College Business Development Center partnered with the *FDIC Money Smart Program* to teach students and community members how to understanding credit, personal budgets and assessing the cost and benefits of consumer and home loans.

For Dr. Swinton, Benedict College is a place where "Learning to Be the Best: A Power for Good Into the 21st Century" is more than a slogan -- it characterizes his commitment to quality and continuous improvement of the College and its surrounding community. Dr. Swinton is married to the former Patricia Lewis. They are proud parents of six adult children and grandparents of eight grandchildren.