

By: Representatives Faulkner, Karriem,
Kinkade

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 56

1 A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING MARCH 26, 2024, AS RUST COLLEGE DAY
2 AT THE CAPITOL.

3 WHEREAS, established in 1866, by the Freedman's Aid Society
4 of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Rust College was founded by
5 missionaries from the North who opened a school in Asbury
6 Methodist Episcopal Church, accepting adults of all ages, as well
7 as children, for instruction in elementary subjects, and a year
8 later, the first building on the present campus was erected; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1870, the school was chartered as Shaw
10 University, honoring the Reverend S.O. Shaw, who made a gift of
11 \$10,000 to the new institution, and in 1892, the name was changed
12 to Rust University to avoid confusion with another Shaw
13 University, with the new name being a tribute to Richard S. Rust
14 of Cincinnati, Ohio, Secretary of the Freedman's Aid Society, and
15 in 1915, the name was changed to Rust College; and

16 WHEREAS, as students progressed, high school and college
17 courses were added to the curriculum, and in 1878, two students
18 graduated from the college department, and as public schools for



19 African Americans became more widespread, the need for private
20 schools decreased, and in 1930, the grade school was discontinued,
21 but the high school continued to function until 1953; and

22 WHEREAS, a significant change in the administration of this
23 distinguished institution took place in 1920, when Dr. M.S. Davage
24 became the first African-American president, to hold that
25 position, and Dr. L. M. McCoy (1924), his successor, was the first
26 alumnus to serve his Alma Mater as president, and he was followed
27 in 1957, by Dr. Earnest A. Smith, an alumnus, class of 1937, and
28 in 1967, Dr. William A. McMillan, a non-alumnus assumed the
29 presidency, and in 1993, Dr. David L. Beckley, an alumnus, class
30 of 1967, became the 11th president of Rust College, in 2020, Dr.
31 Ivy Taylor became the 12th, and first female president of Rust
32 College, and in 2023, Dr. Robert M. Dixon was named interim
33 president of Rust College; and

34 WHEREAS, among approximately 20,000 former students of Rust
35 College, many completed only their elementary or secondary
36 education; however, more than 5,500 have graduated from the
37 college department, and among these alumni are bishops of the
38 United Methodist Church and other church denominations, public
39 school teachers and administrators, college presidents, lawyers,
40 physicians, business and government leaders and ministers; and

41 WHEREAS, equipping and inspiring students for excellence and
42 service in their communities and throughout the world, Rust
43 College is a student-centered college where everyone is committed



44 to the success of all students, and it recognizes the threefold
45 functions of education as teaching, learning, research, and
46 community service, with its primary mission as teaching; and

47 WHEREAS, Rust College has dynamic and excellent associate and
48 baccalaureate degree programs designed to support the cultural,
49 moral, and spiritual development of its students, and is grounded
50 in its legacy and commitment to social justice; and

51 WHEREAS, with a vision that reflects an institution of
52 learning, inside and outside of the classroom, Rust College
53 prepares its students for careers as they study in an environment
54 that nurtures academic and personal development; and

55 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to
56 commend extraordinary Mississippi academic institutions,
57 especially those such as Rust College, whose dedication to
58 academic excellence and commitment to its students brings honor to
59 this illustrious college, and to the State of Mississippi:

60 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
61 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
62 designate March 26, 2024, as Rust College Day at the Capitol.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
64 furnished to Dr. Robert M. Dixon, President of Rust College, and
65 to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

