



### **Clarence D. Armbrister, 14<sup>th</sup> President**

Clarence D. “Clay” Armbrister became the 14<sup>th</sup> president of Johnson C. Smith University on January 1, 2018. Armbrister, who brings over 35 years of experience in the private and public sectors, has an extensive background at all levels of education, including time in senior administrative and leadership positions at Temple University, Johns Hopkins University, the School District of Philadelphia and Girard College. In addition to his background in education, Armbrister has held executive positions in law, government and finance.

Armbrister began his professional career as a lawyer in the Public Finance Department of Saul, Ewing Remick & Saul, leaving as a partner in 1994 to serve as Philadelphia City Treasurer, where he managed the city’s funds, investments and debt. In 1995, he coordinated the presentations of city officials which convinced the rating agencies to restore the City of Philadelphia’s debt ratings to investment grade from “junk bond” ratings.

He went on to become the Managing Director of the Philadelphia School District, which at the time was the fourth largest school district in the country. Serving simultaneously as its chief financial officer and chief operating officer, Armbrister addressed head-on the issue of inadequate funding to urban schools compared to their suburban counterparts and significantly advanced the debate.

His return to the private sector as an investment banker at PaineWebber (subsequently UBS) saw him advance quickly, from a Vice President to a Director in the Municipal Securities Group, where he led nationwide efforts in underwriting transactions for issuers in the K-12 public education market.

Armbrister’s strong belief in the transformative powers of education was the primary factor in his return to the field of education. Armbrister joined Temple University, and for the next five years, he progressed from Senior Vice President for Administration to Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. During his tenure, Armbrister was responsible for \$400 million in capital projects on several campuses and managed the campus through a rapid conversion from primarily a commuter school to a residential campus. He also led Temple’s management, planning and coordination of student affairs, facilities management services, campus safety services, intercollegiate athletics, computer and information services, affirmative action, enrollment management services, and management analysis.

Armbrister has also taught in higher education. He served as an adjunct faculty member at Temple, developing and teaching a municipal finance curriculum in the Beasley School of Law. Additionally, he served as Chief of Staff to the President and Senior Vice President at Johns Hopkins University and more recently, President and Chief Executive Officer at Girard College, a 170-year-old historically unique Philadelphia boarding school.

Armbrister has been successful at the highest levels of municipal government, working with some of the most well-known politicians in the recent history of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He was appointed Philadelphia City Treasurer by then-Mayor Ed Rendell, who was subsequently elected Governor of Pennsylvania. Armbrister also served as former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter's first Chief of Staff.

He has a long history of volunteer service. Currently he serves on the boards of Charlotte Regional Business Alliance – Executive Committee, Charlotte Center City Partners, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health and Health Partners Plans, Inc., Charlotte Executive Leadership Council, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association – Vice President, Go Red for Women, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, and All In 2040 Center City Vision Plan Steering Committee. He is the former President of the Board of the National Adoption Center, and recently completed service on the board of the Community College of Philadelphia. When Armbrister was a practicing attorney, he maintained memberships in the American Bar Association, National Bar Association, Pennsylvania Bar Association, National Association of Securities Professionals, and Government Finance Officers Association.

A native of Miami, Florida, Armbrister received Bachelor of Arts degrees in political science (concentrating in public policy) and in economics from the University of Pennsylvania, and his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Michigan Law School. He and his wife, Denise, have five children and four grandchildren.