Democracy 2012: The Road to Charlotte
President’s Message

Johnson C. Smith University is proud to pave the way to the Democratic National Convention by offering a nonpartisan civic education opportunity through our Lyceum Series “Democracy 2012: The Road to Charlotte.” This is our part in helping to educate and engage the greater Charlotte area in the democratic process as we present a wide range of prominent speakers from local, regional and national arenas. That is why these lectures are free and open to the public.

Our ultimate goal is to challenge all to become politically aware, socially active and intellectually inspired so that we can make America the best it can be. This presidential election year will have a lasting impact on students, faculty and the Charlotte community. I invite you to join us in welcoming an outstanding slate of media, political, government and education experts as we expand our horizons.

We hope you enjoy this series as we travel on this road together.

Ronald L. Carter, Ph.D.
President
Eugene Robinson is a columnist with The Washington Post and a regular contributor to MSNBC. He is a winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for his commentary on the 2008 presidential race. During his 25-year career at The Washington Post, Mr. Robinson has worked as a city hall reporter, city editor, foreign correspondent in Buenos Aires and London, a foreign editor and assistant managing editor for the paper’s award-winning Style section.

A native of Orangeburg, S.C., Mr. Robinson is a graduate of the University of Michigan. He began his journalism career at the San Francisco Chronicle, where he was one of two reporters assigned to cover the trial of kidnapped newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst.

Mr. Robinson was a Nieman Fellow in Journalism at Harvard and is author of “Coal to Cream: A Black Man’s Journey Beyond Color to an Affirmation of Race” and “Last Dance in Havana: The Final Days of Fidel and the Start of the New Cuban Revolution.” His latest book, “Disintegration,” was released in October 2010. He has received numerous journalism awards from the National Association of Black Journalists.

“Democracy is not just a question of having a vote. It consists of strengthening each citizen’s possibility and capacity to participate in the deliberations involved in life in society.”

Fernando Henrique Cardoso, (former President of Brazil)
Dr. Michael K. Fauntroy is Associate Professor at George Mason University School of Public Policy, where he teaches courses on civil rights policy, urban policy and American government. Prior to joining George Mason, he was an analyst in American national government at the Congressional Research Service. There, he provided research and consultations for Congress. He also has conducted research on major civil rights issues as an analyst at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Dr. Fauntroy is author of “Republicans and the Black Vote,” which analyzes the historical relationship between African Americans and the GOP. He also is author of “Home Rule or House Rule? Congress and the Erosion of Local Governance in the District of Columbia.”


“THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS PART FREEDOM.”

Nelson Mandela (former President of South Africa)
February 21, 2012, 7:00 p.m., Biddle Hall Auditorium
Re-imagining Democracy in an Age of Multiculturalism

Amad Shakur, founder of the Center for the African Diaspora (Charlotte, N.C.) and Director of Development for the International Museum of Muslim Cultures (Jackson, Miss.)

Amad Shakur is a writer for academic and scholarly publications. He is a senior filmmaker with Unity Productions Foundation, a Washington, D.C.-based film company that collaborates with the National Endowment for the Humanities. The award-winning company has filmed seven documentaries since 2004.

He is founder of the Center for the African Diaspora in Charlotte, N.C. The center is an institution dedicated to teaching the histories, cultures, events and movements of people of African descent throughout the African Diaspora. He serves as Director of Development for the International Museum of Muslim Cultures, in Jackson, Miss., the first museum promoting the cultures of global Muslims.

As a historian, Mr. Shakur lectures about the history of Islamic Spain, and the events, movements and personalities in North and West African history from the 9th to the 19th century. Since 2010 he has been the host of the radio show the “Open Forum,” which airs on American Muslim 360.com.

“The experience of democracy is like the experience of life itself—always changing, infinite in its variety, sometimes turbulent and all the more valuable for having been tested by adversity.”

Jimmy Carter
(39th President of the United States of America)
Ann Caulkins is President and Publisher of The Charlotte Observer. She joined The Charlotte Observer in 2006 after having served as the first woman president of The State in Columbia, S.C. She was publisher of The State for three years and earned a reputation as an agent of positive change.

Ms. Caulkins started her career with Knight Ridder in 1984 at the Fort Worth Star Telegram. She was promoted to Retail Advertising Director in 1992. In 1998, she was named Advertising Director for The Herald–Leader in Lexington, Ky. and later became Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

Her civic engagement encompasses serving on boards of directors with the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, Levine Museum of the New South, Charlotte Center City Partners, N.C. Conference for Women and the Charlotte Regional Partnership.

Gerald Johnson is CEO and Publisher of The Charlotte Post Publishing Company, Inc. He worked at Bank of America as Vice President of Systems Manager Information Technology. He shared his expertise with Johnson C. Smith University as Director of the Computer Center and Instructor of Mathematics and Computer Science where he designed and implemented the first automated registration system for the school.

Mr. Johnson is President of The Charlotte Post Foundation and a member of the American Leadership Forum. His leadership in the arts spans from serving on the Gantt Center Board of Directors to the Arts and Science Council oversight committee.

An advocate of education, Mr. Johnson, is a board member of Sugar Creek Charter School and chaired the Charlotte Advocates for Education. He also served on the leadership team of the Community Building Initiative and the Sow Much Good organization. He is past marketing chair for the United Way of Central Carolinas and the Mechanics & Farmers Advisory Board.
Harvey Gantt has been an activist in the political arena since 1974. He served more than three terms on the Charlotte City Council in the late 70s and was named Mayor Pro-Tem in 1981. Two years later, he became Charlotte’s first African-American Mayor and later went on to serve two successive terms.

In 1990 and 1996, Mr. Gantt ran for national office and challenged Jesse Helms in the North Carolina U.S. Senate race. While unsuccessful in winning the senate seat, he won national acclaim for his positions on education, health care, the environment and his vision for improving the quality of life for all citizens.

Mr. Gantt has been recognized for his leadership and contribution to the Charlotte community. He was honored by the Charlotte Post with the “2007 Lifetime Achievement Award,” and by Center City Partners with the “2008 Vision Award.” In 2009, the Afro-American Cultural Center named its new building “The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Arts + Culture.”

Richard Vinroot is an attorney with Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson, P.A., Attorneys at Law in Charlotte. He has been in the political spotlight on the local and state levels. He was Mayor of Charlotte from 1991 to 1995 after serving for eight years on the Charlotte City Council from 1983 to 1991. In 2000, Mr. Vinroot was the Republican nominee for North Carolina Governor.

In recognition for his years of political service, Mr. Vinroot was awarded the 1995 Municipal Leader of the Year Award by American City & County magazine. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Martin–Marietta Materials, Inc. For his service in Vietnam with the U.S. Army in 1968, Mr. Vinroot received the Bronze Star.

He is a member and a former director of the Mecklenburg County Bar and a member of the North Carolina and American Bar Associations.
Founded in 1867, Johnson C. Smith University is a premier independent urban liberal arts university located in the heart of Charlotte, N.C. The University offers a progressive curriculum with 26 fields of study to nearly 1,600 students who come from a variety of ethnic, socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds.
The University is dedicated to providing a world-class education to its students through excellent academic programs that focus on servant leadership, civic engagement and global responsibility. Students understand and appreciate various cultures of the world and identify the role and impact they can have in society, both in college and after graduation.

JCSU is committed to hiring and retaining expert faculty members who prepare students for a demanding job market. At Johnson C. Smith University, students develop the professional and social skills needed for success in the workforce. The enriching environment enables students to explore and grow – intellectually, physically, socially, culturally and spiritually – and develop a sense of social responsibility.