



DR. DEBRA DABNEY **AUSTIN** CLASS OF 2009

Dr. Debra Dabney Austin is a distinguished retired administrator with over 30 years of leadership in higher education. Her career began as an English instructor at Lake-Sumter Community College and evolved through a series of influential roles, including Director of Applied Sciences, Executive Vice President, and Acting President at Tallahassee Community College. She also served as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Clinical Professor at Florida State University, and as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Florida A&M University. Notably, Dr. Austin broke barriers as the first Black woman appointed Chancellor of the State University System of Florida. She holds degrees from Michigan State University, the University of Florida, and Florida State University, along with an honorary doctorate from Flagler College.

Dr. Austin's impact extends beyond academia into civic and community leadership. She has received numerous honors, including the "Guardian of the Flame" award and the Christopher J. Campbell Distinguished Alumni Award. She is featured in *Answering the Call: African American Women in Higher Education Leadership* and is a Life Member of Leadership Florida and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Her service includes leadership roles with The Links, Incorporated, Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare, Whole Child Leon, and Bethel AME Church. Currently, she serves as Dean of the Scott-Hawkins Leadership Institute. Dr. Austin cherishes her family, including two daughters, two sons-in-law, and two energetic grandchildren, and honors the memory of her late husband, Kenneth Austin.