

## **Biography of Paul A. Jones, Ph.D.**

### **10<sup>th</sup> President of Fort Valley State University**

Paul A. Jones, Ph.D., is the 10th president of Fort Valley State University.

Recognized for being a visionary leader and strategic thinker with an extensive background in higher education. With nearly 37 years of higher education experience, President Paul Jones was appointed to take Fort Valley State's helm in December 2015 following a career that included leadership positions in Georgia, Colorado, Maryland, and Utah.

Jones, an astute and affable administrator who is committed to the transformative power of higher education, has spent the last several years advancing FVSU's standing as one of the nation's most respected institutions of higher learning, including its consistent ranking as the top public historically Black college and university (HBCU) in Georgia by U.S. News and World Reports.

Before joining FVSU, President Jones served two years as interim president at Darton State College (2013-2015) in Albany, Georgia. Throughout his higher education career, he served in numerous senior leadership roles at Georgia College & State University (2002-2013), including senior vice president for finance and administration, vice president and chief of staff, vice president for institutional research and enrollment management, and several interim roles including interim vice president of academic affairs and president. President Jones was also a Professor of Educational Administration at Georgia College.

In 2019, President Jones established a University-wide steering committee to begin an inclusive and collaborative comprehensive strategic planning process to chart the University's next five years. This 2020-2025 plan, *Unleashing 21st Century Innovation, Transformation and Excellence*, focuses on four priorities: Exceptional Student Experience, Operational Excellence, Organizational Identity, and Engagement and Collaboration.

During President Jones's stabilizing tenure at FVSU, he expanded the academic offerings on the campus and online, bolstered innovative programs focused on student success and renovated and modernized aging campus structures. He also has increased retention and graduation rates, and FVSU experienced its highest enrollment since the fall of 2013.

Jones is also a member of several boards, including, The Medical Center of Peach County, Atrium Health Navicent Board of Directors, Fort Valley State University Foundation, Middle Georgia Goodwill Industries, Past Chair of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Council of 1890s Officers, Co-chair of the USDA-1890 Task Force, Museum of Aviation Foundation Board of Governors, and the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Executive Board.

Jones and his wife Sylvia were named 2012 Alumni of the Year at Utah State University, where

he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees. President Jones was also presented with the Honorary Doctor of Education degree from Utah State University in 2023 and named the 2021 Distinguished Alumni of the College of Humanities and Social Science. The Los Angeles, California native earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree in education and human resource studies from Colorado State University. From 2007-08, President Jones served as an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow at the University of West Florida. In 2023, President Jones was listed as one of Georgia's Most Influential Leaders by Georgia Trend. In 2024, President Jones was awarded the 2024 Diamond Award for Excellence in Higher Education Leadership by the Not Alone Foundation.

President and First Lady Jones have two adult children: Isaiah and Daphne.