

**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY
Class of 2017-2018**

**Opening Seminar
July 20– 22, 2017**

Roster of Presenters

Makola Abdullah, President, Virginia State University

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On February 1, 2016, **Makola M. Abdullah**, Ph.D. became the 14th President of Virginia State University (VSU). In his remarks during his introduction to the Trojan family, President Abdullah outlined his four core beliefs: *I believe in God. I believe in family. I believe in the transformative nature of education. I believe in Virginia State University.*

President Abdullah also emphasized several focus areas to sustain VSU as an 1890 Land-Grant University. The areas of focus include providing a transformative experience for students, strategically investing in academic programs, partnering with others as a university to tell the VSU story, embracing the University as a top Land-Grant University and embracing the

University's role as Virginia's Opportunity University.

Under President Abdullah's leadership, the University has experienced some significant achievements. The University had a 30 percent increase in the fall 2016 freshman enrollment, recognized by ESSENCE magazine as one of the nation's top 20 "Best Colleges for African Americans", established partnerships with local school systems where VSU students tutor students in mathematics and reading and opened the Academic Center of Excellence as a one-stop hub for first-year students to receive career and academic advising and tutorial services.

President Abdullah is an academic administrator committed to excellence. He is an internationally-renowned educator recognized for outstanding research. Prior to his appointment as president of Virginia State University, Dr. Abdullah served as provost and senior vice president at Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Fla. (2013-2016), provost and vice president for academic affairs at Florida Memorial University in Miami Gardens, Fla. (2011-2013), and dean and director of 1890 land grant programs at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee, Fla (2008-2011).

President Abdullah is a Chicago native who is the youngest African American to receive a Ph.D. in engineering. He earned his undergraduate degree from Howard University in civil engineering and a Master of Science in Civil Engineering from Northwestern University. He serves as member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, and the 5000 Role Models of Excellence.

He and his wife, Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah, Ph.D., are the proud parents of two college students, Mikaili and Sefiyetu, who both attend a historically black college or university.

Linda Bleicken – President, American Academic Leadership Institute; President Emerita, Armstrong State University

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Linda Bleicken served as the seventh president of Armstrong State University from July 2009 until her retirement in June 2017. During her tenure, Bleicken reaffirmed the university's commitment to student success and launched the Commitment Fund which provides need-based gap funding to assist degree completion. Bleicken oversaw \$100 million for new construction and renovation of existing buildings, including a new Student Union, Windward Commons residential housing, the Student Success Center, a LEED Gold-certified Learning Commons, and a new campus facility for the Hinesville Liberty Center. Most recently, design of the \$29 million Waters College of Health Professions has been completed, and ground will be broken for the new structure in August

2017. Private fundraising has grown steadily during the past five years, including a multimillion dollar gift, the largest in the institution's history. Retention and graduation rates continue to grow, with highest gains among under-represented minority students.

As president, Bleicken served on both local and national boards, most recently completing terms on the board of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the NCAA Division II President's Council. Bleicken was recently named president-elect of the American Academic Leadership Institute and will begin her duties on July 1, 2017.

David Brailow, Vice President for Development, Council of Independent Colleges

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David Brailow became CIC's vice president for development in August 2016. He is responsible for the solicitation and management of corporate sponsorships and foundation grants and oversees selected CIC leadership and faculty-development programs. Previously, he served for 15 years as vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college at Franklin College (IN), and in 2016 he was awarded the rank of professor emeritus at Franklin. Brailow was professor of English and served in various administrative roles at McKendree College, now McKendree University (IL), from 1982 to 2001. In the last several years, he has been active in CIC initiatives, including the Workshop for Chief Academic Officers in Their Third or Fourth Year of Service, the Degree Qualifications

Profile Consortium, and the CIC/Walmart College Success Awards program. Brailow has served on the boards of arts and education organizations and has published articles and book chapters on general education reform, faculty scholarship, and contemporary performances of Shakespeare. He received his BA in English from Amherst College and his PhD from the University of Oregon.

Ken Dobbins – President Emeritus and President of Southeast Missouri State University

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Kenneth W. Dobbins is president emeritus and the seventeenth president of Southeast Missouri State University. Dobbins served as president from 1999-2015, after serving in several positions in higher education administration both at Kent State University in Ohio and at Southeast.

During his tenure at Southeast, academic programs have been enhanced, including establishment of a School of Polytechnic Studies and the Earl and Margie Holland School of Visual and Performing Arts which opened in Fall 2007 on the new \$50 million River Campus. The Donald L. Harrison College of Business has been recognized for the last three years by a Princeton Review publication as one of the best business schools in the nation and the

Department of Communication has achieved national accreditation of its programs in journalism, advertising, public relations, radio, and video production. The Department of Industrial and Engineering Technology recently received its initial ABET accreditation. He earned his B.S. degree in accounting from the University of Akron (Ohio) in 1971 and served as a commissioned officer and civilian executive in the U.S. Air Force for almost 10 years. He received the M.B.A. degree in 1979 from Old Dominion University (Virginia), and the Ph.D. in higher education administration in 1987 from Kent State. He is also a Certified Public Accountant in Ohio.

Rich Ekman- President, Council of Independent Colleges

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Rich Ekman has been president of the Council of Independent Colleges since 2000. During his tenure CIC has grown in membership, added many programs and services, and increased participation in CIC's major programs. He previously served as vice president for programs of Atlantic Philanthropies and, from 1991 to 1999, as secretary and senior program officer of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. From 1982 until 1991, he was at the National Endowment for the Humanities, successively as director of the Division of Education Programs and the Division of Research Programs. His previous experience includes service as vice president and dean of Hiram College, where he was also a tenured member of the history faculty, and assistant to the provost at the University of

Massachusetts at Boston. He currently serves as a member of many boards, including those that provide guidance to the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Harvard University's Library and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, American Academic Leadership Institute, American Council on Education, and the Dictionary of American Regional English. Ekman has been awarded honorary degrees by Alvernia, Otterbein, and Marywood Universities and Alderson-Broadbuddus, Bethany, Georgetown, Hastings, and Ursinus Colleges and is a recipient of the W.E.B DuBois Medal of Harvard University. He is co-author, with Richard E. Quandt, of *Technology and Scholarly Communication* (University of California Press, 1999). His essays have appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *University Business*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and *Washington Post*. He earned his AB in history and PhD in history of American civilization from Harvard University.

Andrea Warren Hamos – Vice President for Consulting Operations and Senior Consultant, Academic Search, Inc.

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Andrea Warren Hamos joined *Academic Search* as Vice President for Consulting Operations and Senior Consultant in 2013. Previously, she served as Associate Director, and subsequently Interim Director, of the American Council on Education's (ACE) Emerging Leaders Group and the ACE Fellows Program. At ACE, Dr. Hamos also served as a co-chair of ACE's Annual Meeting, work that included the development of programs for presidents and chancellors, new presidents, and presidential spouses and partners.

Prior to joining ACE, Dr. Hamos came up through faculty and administrative ranks at colleges in Massachusetts, and ultimately served as associate dean and then interim dean of the college at Randolph-Macon College in Virginia. She has also taught at Richmond-The American International University in London. In her administrative work Dr. Hamos has led curriculum revision, designed and implemented faculty development opportunities, overseen the development of a center for teaching and learning, and served as an external reviewer of foreign language programs at the college and pre-college levels. In addition to her work in higher education, she has served on the boards of directors and executive committees of an independent K–12 school and of a synagogue.

Dr. Hamos has spoken at regional, national, and international conferences on her disciplinary research, on her work in academic administration, and on leadership development. She has facilitated workshops for, and been a speaker at, leadership development programs including those offered by the American Academic Leadership Institute, ACE, AASCU's Millennium Leadership Institute, other higher education leadership organizations, and individual colleges and universities. She earned the B.A. in Spanish and French *cum laude* and the Ph.D. in Spanish literature, both from the University of Pennsylvania, and the M.A. in Spanish from The Ohio State University. In addition, she studied at the Sorbonne (Paris) and the University of Salamanca (Spain).

Dr. Hamos is located in the Washington, DC office of *Academic Search* and supervises consulting operations as well as serving in a senior consultant role for searches. Since joining *Academic Search* in 2013, Dr. Hamos has completed nearly forty searches for president, vice presidents and other senior leadership positions at public and private colleges and universities.

Thomas Hellie, President, Linfield College

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Thomas Hellie earned his B.A. in Speech & Theatre Arts at Luther College, his M.A. and Ph.D. in theatre history at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He was on the faculty of Hiram College from 1980-1989. From 1989-1999 he was vice president of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, a consortium of fourteen selective liberal arts colleges. In 1999, he became president and executive director of the James S. Kemper Foundation in Chicago. He became president of Linfield College in 2006 and will retire in June 2018.

While at Linfield he has tripled the enrollment of Americans of Color (from 10% to 33%); built or renovated six buildings; created the Oregon Wine History Archive (the first of its kind in the United States); and launched a liberal arts-based wine studies program. During his tenure, the

college has also raised 12 million dollars to endow five faculty chairs in the liberal arts and has doubled the size of its nursing school. In addition to his work at Linfield, he has served as secretary of the Foundation for Independent Higher Education and chair of the Student Aid Committee of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; he currently chairs the Board of Directors of the Council of Independent Colleges.

Sandra Jordan, Chancellor, The University of South Carolina - Aiken

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Sandra J. Jordan became the fourth Chancellor of the University of South Carolina Aiken on July 1, 2012 and, as Chancellor, serves as the chief executive officer and principal spokesperson for the University. Over the past 30 years, Dr. Jordan has served in a number of cabinet-level positions at universities, including Academic Vice President and Provost before becoming Chancellor. Dr. Jordan received her Doctorate (Ph.D.) and Master of Arts degrees in the History of Art from the University of Georgia. Dr. Jordan attended the Management Development Program at Harvard University's Institute for Higher Education; the 21st Century Leadership Institute sponsored by ALIA and AACU, and was a summer fellow at Vanderbilt University's Institute for Higher Education Management. In 2016, Dr. Jordan became a Riley Diversity Leadership Fellow.

Since taking office, Chancellor Jordan has built a solid network of community partners, aligned university programs with regional workforce needs, increased student enrollment, enhanced student diversity, completed the university's first capital campaign, and strengthened academic support programs so students are prepared to succeed as future leaders and engaged citizens.

Dr. Jordan has a strong commitment to the community and serves on the board for the Aiken Chamber of Commerce, the Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization (SRSCRO), the United Way of Aiken County, the Strom Thurmond Foundation, and the Aiken Corporation. Additionally, she serves on the Executive Board of the Southern Association of Colleges/Commission on Colleges; and is the former president of the Southeastern University Conference. She serves on the South Carolina Women in Higher Education board of directors, the board of directors for the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, and the Peach Belt Conference president's council. Recently, Dr. Jordan was elected to the NCAA DII President's Council and the Board of Directors for the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU).

Throughout her career, she has worked extensively to expand international educational partnerships by negotiating agreements and building alliances with universities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, China, Thailand, Bahrain, Jordan, Korea, Taiwan, Great Britain, the Caribbean, and India. Since her arrival at USC Aiken, the university has increased international partnerships and opportunities for student exchange.

Dr. Jordan and her husband Michael reside in Aiken. They have one son, Matthew, who just completed a Ph.D. in electrical engineering at Georgia Tech.

Robert Lindgren – President, Randolph-Macon College

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Robert R. Lindgren is in his 12th year at Randolph-Macon College.

He came to Randolph-Macon from Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Maryland, where he served for nearly 12 years as vice president for Development and Alumni Relations and led two of the largest campaigns in American higher education. Prior to Johns Hopkins, he served in the same role for 10 years at the University of Florida.

A native of Western Michigan, President Lindgren earned both his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Florida, which also recently awarded him an Honorary Doctorate. He also earned a master's degree in management studies

from Oxford University in England.

Since his arrival, enrollment at Randolph-Macon is up by 35%, and the College has welcomed the largest incoming classes in its history. President Lindgren is spearheading the implementation of strategic and master plans, both which have led to a transformation on the College's beautiful camp and were the focus of the College's capital campaign: *Building Extraordinary*.

Under President Lindgren's leadership, the college surpassed the \$100 million campaign goal, 19 months ahead of schedule, and then, the Board raised the goal to \$115 million. At the close of the campaign the college exceeded \$125 million. Priorities for the campaign included upgrading and building state-of-the-art academic, residential and athletic facilities, increasing the endowment to provide greater opportunities and support for faculty and students in and out of the classroom, and enhancing student outcomes through a more intentional focus on career and graduate school preparation.

During President Lindgren's time at the College, he has become actively engaged with the community. In addition to serving on the board of the Greater Richmond Chamber, the Richmond Forum and the World Affairs Council, he has served on the Governor's Higher Education Commission and chaired the Council of Independent Colleges of Virginia, the Commonwealth's organization of private colleges and universities.

He has also dedicated himself to making connections with R-MC's students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents and the surrounding communities. And his passion for students has earned him the reputation as "the students' president."

Troy Paino – President, University of Mary Washington

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Troy D. Paino took office as the tenth president of the University of Mary Washington, effective July 1, 2016. A personable, student-focused leader, Paino is deeply committed to Mary Washington's public liberal arts and sciences mission of providing academic excellence and social uplift in equal measure.

Paino earned doctorate and master's degrees in American studies from Michigan State University. He holds a juris doctorate from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in history and philosophy from Evangel University.

His teaching and scholarly interests include American higher education, 20th-century cultural and social history and American legal history. He has written

extensively on the history of American sports and published his book, *The Social History of the United States: 1960s*, in 2008.

Dr. Paino serves on the board of directors of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), and he is a member of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) President's Trust for Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP). He is president of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC).

Prior to coming to UMW, Paino served for six years as president of Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri. Previously, he was Truman State's provost and vice president for academic affairs, and he also served as dean of Winona State University's College of Liberal Arts.

He and his wife, Kelly, have two daughters, Sophia and Chloe.

Marianne Schimelfenig – General Counsel, Saint Joseph's University

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Marianne Schimelfenig has served as an in-house lawyer for public and private institutions of higher education for 27 years. Since 2008, she has served as General Counsel & Corporate Secretary for Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In this role, Marianne is responsible for overseeing all legal issues affecting or involving the University. In her capacity of Corporate Secretary of the University, she works closely with the Board of Trustees as well as the Board's Governance & Leadership, Executive and Audit & Risk Committees. Before coming to Philadelphia in 2008, Marianne served for 10 years as the first General Counsel for Saint Mary's College of California. Prior to

her position at Saint Mary's, she was a trial lawyer for the Office of General Counsel for the Regents of the University of California system and earlier in her legal career, she was a partner in the trial department of the Portland, Oregon law firm of Spears, Lubersky (now Lane Powell).

Marianne earned her bachelor's degree in history from Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania, a master's in American history from the University of Scranton, and her J.D. from Lewis & Clark Northwestern School of Law in Portland, Oregon. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Marianne taught high school in New York and Pennsylvania, worked as a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill, served as a regulatory specialist for the Clorox Company in Oakland, California and, while in law school, worked as law clerk in the Portland District Attorney's Office and in the legal department of Georgia Pacific Corporation in Portland and Atlanta.

She has been actively involved in the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA) for over 20 years, most recently serving in 2010-2011 as its President and Chairperson of the NACUA Board of Directors. Among other NACUA volunteer positions, she has served as Chairperson of the Committee on Nominations & Elections, the Committee on Honors & Awards and has been a featured speaker at NACUA, AGB, NACUBO, ACCU and other higher education related conferences and gatherings. In addition to Pennsylvania, Marianne is admitted to active practice in California, New York, the District of Columbia and Oregon and before the Supreme Court of the United States. She is a member of the University of Pennsylvania Inn of Court and the Forum of Executive Women, in connection with which she serves on the Forum's Membership and Women in Executive Leadership and Governance Committees.

Steve Scott, President, Pittsburg State

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A Baxter Springs, Kan., native and Pittsburg State University alumnus, **Dr. Steven A. Scott** is passionate about higher education. He understands the important role Pittsburg State plays in the region because he has invested more than 30 years of his life helping our students succeed. During his time at Pittsburg State he has served in a number of important leadership roles. In 1995, he was named chairperson of the Department of Special Services and Leadership; in 1999 he was selected as dean of the College of Education; and in 2006 he was named vice president for academic affairs. In 2008, in recognition of his broad scope of responsibility he earned the title of Provost and, in 2009, he was selected by the Kansas Board of Regents to become the ninth president of Pittsburg State University. Under Scott's leadership, Pittsburg State University has made great strides. Strategic planning and hard work have allowed the university to weather the economic storms of recent years and retain its focus on providing students and faculty with the very best educational experience. Academic milestones include the addition of a Doctor of Nursing Practice, the first doctoral program in university history and the addition of the region's first undergraduate polymer chemistry degree. Thanks to strong support from university alumni and friends, Pittsburg State has been able to invest in its facilities to the tune of nearly \$65 million. Featured facilities include the \$33 million Bicknell Family Center for the Arts, the \$13 million Robert W. Plaster Center and the \$14 million renovation and expansion of the Jack H. Overman Student Center. Scott understands the importance of athletics in the life of a campus, its students, and the community. An active advocate on the national level, in 2012 he was appointed to serve on the NCAA Division II Presidents Council, the highest governance body in Division II. In 2015, he was elected vice chair of the Presidents Council. In this role, he chaired the NCAA Division II Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and served on the NCAA Board of Governors. Later that same year, Scott's colleagues selected him to lead the group as chair. He served as chair from January 2016 to January 2017, at which time his service on the Presidents Council ended. Scott earned a B.S.Ed. in mathematics from Pittsburg State in 1973, an MS in mathematics from Oklahoma State University in 1977, and EDS from Pittsburg State University in 1984, and an Ed.D. from Oklahoma State University in 1990.

President Scott and his wife, Cathy, have two grown children, Kylie and Phil and three grandchildren, Josie, Hank and Beau.

Lori Varlotta, President, Hiram College

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On July 1, 2014, **Dr. Lori E. Varlotta** became the 22nd president of Hiram College. She is the institution's first female president. Dr. Varlotta and the leadership team she has assembled have made visible strides both on and beyond the Hiram campus. Under her leadership, the College has celebrated many firsts and broken records in key areas. On June 30, 2016, for example, Hiram recorded the largest fundraising year in its 167-year history, receiving \$9.3 million in (cash) gifts. Several months later, in February 2017, Hiram received its largest single cash gift of \$2.1 million. Her laser focus in monitoring revenues and expenses in fiscal years 2015 and 2016 also led the College to its strongest financial position in recent history. As she finishes her third year, Varlotta continues to work with Admission, Financial Aid, and other areas across campus to design and implement an enrollment growth plan. The enrollment plan is being fueled

by several new programs. One of the most impressive is the coming *Tech and Trek* mobile initiative that integrates 21st-century technology with Hiram's enduring liberal arts curriculum. The first of its kind in Ohio, Tech and Trek ([link here](#)) will issue an iPad Pro, Apple Pencil, and keyboard bundle to each of the College's full-time, traditional college students in Fall 2017. Another initiative to be launched in Fall 2017 is the 3-year degree pathway ([link here](#)) in 20 academic programs. Also, reconfigurations in the Professional and Graduate Studies (PGS) side of the College are yielding positive outcomes in the Community College Partnerships and other adult learners' programs.

Perhaps Dr. Varlotta's broadest campus impact can be seen in the shared governance structures she revitalized shortly after she arrived. For the first time in the College's history, the faculty, staff, and students have respective structures in place that allow them to participate in relevant decision-making processes. These shared governance entities have played a role in identifying and promoting the academic differentiators that will set Hiram apart in the recruitment and retention of students.

On some campuses, such prioritization can lead to polarization. At Hiram, however, constituent groups (from the Board of Trustees to the students) have worked positively and productively to make joint recommendations about the academic differentiators that they believe can and should be highlighted. The buy-in and participation has been wide and deep—no small feat for any campus.

Before coming to Hiram College, Dr. Varlotta spent 11 years at California State University, Sacramento. At the time of her departure, she served as senior vice president for planning, enrollment management, and student affairs, where she led 31 departments in the areas of enrollment, student life, retention, educational equity, and NCAA Division I athletics.

Dr. Varlotta's 31-year career in higher education administration extends beyond any single campus. Several years ago, Dr. Varlotta participated in the design and implementation of the country's first voluntary system of higher education accountability, a project called *College Portrait*. She is frequently invited to regional and national conferences to address pressing issues in higher education, such as retention and graduation, planning and budgeting, transparency and accountability. She has published extensively on the topics of higher education assessment and accountability; student success and graduation; health and wellness; and community, identity, and service.

A proud Pittsburgh native and first-generation college student, Dr. Varlotta earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy at the University of Notre Dame (Indiana), a Master of Science degree in cultural foundations of education from Syracuse University (New York), and an interdisciplinary Doctor of Philosophy degree in educational leadership and feminist philosophy from Miami University (Ohio).