



# FLORIDA CIVIL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

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### -PRESS RELEASE-

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#### CIVIL RIGHTS GROUP CALLS FOR THE TERMINATION OF FAMU PRESIDENT, THE BANDS DIRECTOR AND THE LEADERS OF THE MARCHING 100 PROGRAM

*Hazing, Bullying, and Discriminatory Harassment is creating a  
life and death environment in our education systems nationwide*

ORLANDO, FLORIDA. - The Florida Civil Rights Association calls on **Florida Governor Rick Scott** and **The Florida A&M University Board of Trustees** to immediately terminate Florida A&M President Dr. James Ammons, FAMU Director of bands, Dr. Julian White, Dr. White's assistants Dr. Shelby Chapman, Robert Griffin, Dr. Shaylor James, and the entire current leadership of The Florida A& M University Marching 100 program.

There must be zero tolerance for hazing, bullying, and discriminatory harassment against a student at every level in our education systems, especially HBCU, said J Willie David, III, President of the Florida Civil Rights Association. The good old days of providing a sanctuary to leaders when bad things goes seriously wrong in our education system is over. We must hold the responsible parties accountable, including arrests and criminal prosecution.

The recent death of the late **Florida A&M Drum Major Robert Champion** is confirmation of a culture of hazing that the current president and marching band leadership permitted. The current administration within the University and in the **Florida A&M Marching 100 has created a culture of corruption** that tacitly approves of the persistent and deadly hazing that occurs within the Marching 100 and Florida A&M University.

According to Sharon Saunders of Florida A&M University several people have made complaints about being hazed while at the university.

Moreover, the cable program "**Real Sports with Bryant Gumble**" in 2010 highlighted the problems of hazing within the HBCU bands. Therefore, for President Ammons to call for an inquiry to determine whether there is in fact a culture of hazing within the marching 100 program, shows that not only is he out of touch with the reality at Florida A&M but that there is no institutional control over the marching band program, David said.

The Florida Civil Rights Association believes that the leadership within the University had to know that hazing within the FAMU's Marching 100 was more than sporadic. Even if there was no culture of hazing, the fact that the students may have been comfortable with engaging in such behavior reveals that there was no fear to haze, as revealed by a 2004 lawsuit in which a hazed student sued the university and received an award of over one-million dollars, stated David.

The Florida A&M administration and the current marching band leadership cannot be given the benefit of the doubt in an instance wherein someone has died. It appears that Florida A&M Officials have acted no differently than the administrators and football coaching staff at Penn State University. Both groups of people have known that felonious acts have been allegedly committed but their responses to the allegations hid and enabled further acts of disgusting lawlessness, David added.

The administration failed to protect Robert Champion, thereby denying him his civil rights while participating within the marching band program. By not enforcing an effective anti-hazing policy that severely punishes those whose engaged in the torturous practice of hazing is not only allow it to continue but encourages it as a sadistic right of passage for membership in the marching 100.

**Because current FAMU President James Ammons and the leadership of the Florida A&M music department have failed to insure that the Marching 100 upholds its motto, not only must the requested terminations occur but the Marching 100 must be prohibited from any activities for all of 2012, including any post season football.**

**The Florida Civil Rights Association believes that a virtual one year "death penalty" for the Marching program would send the right message to all Colleges and Universities that at least one institution protects the lives of its students.**

In October, the Florida Civil Rights Association launched a campaign against School Bus Bullying at Orange and Seminole County Public School Districts. No student or parent should ever feel helpless because an educator failed to act on a complaint of hazing, bullying or harassment in a timely manner.

#### ABOUT THE FCRA

The Florida Civil Rights Association (FCRA) is a non-profit, non-partisan, organization based in Orlando with members and supporters nationwide dedicated to protecting and expanding the civil rights and civil liberties guaranteed by the Constitutions and civil rights laws of the United States and the State of Florida. Learn more about the FCRA by visiting our website: [www.fcranews.com](http://www.fcranews.com)

