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Predominantly White Institutions as Leaders for Diversity

Jane Smith, Ph.D.

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Abstract

Predominantly white institutions have a responsibility to educate students for an engaged leadership role in respecting diversity domestically and globally. To do otherwise lessens the opportunity for academic excellence. She will provide diversity strategies for an engaged leader.

Jane E. Smith is Executive Director of the Spelman College Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement. The center, also known by the acronym LEADS, is responsible for program development from the perspective of African American women in five key areas: Leadership Development, Economic Empowerment, Advocacy through the Arts, Dialogue across Difference and Service Learning. Annually, the LEADS center implements a highly successful national women of color leadership conference. Dr. Smith began her professional career in 1975 at Spelman College where she served as Assistant to the President. From 1981 to 1990, she was the Managing Director of INROADS/Atlanta and INROADS/Detroit, responsible for corporate placements for college interns. In 1991, Mrs. Coretta Scott King invited Dr. Smith to serve as Director of Development at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change. From 1994 to 1998, she directed the award-winning Atlanta Project at The Carter Center. In this capacity, she reported to former President Jimmy Carter. From 1998-2001, Dr. Smith was President and CEO of the National Council of Negro Women, founded by noted educator and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune. Prior to rejoining Spelman College in 2004, Dr. Smith was CEO of Business and Professional Women/USA, a national membership organization that promotes equity for all women in the workplace.

Today, in addition to her work as Executive Director of the LEADS center, Dr. Smith is a member of advisory boards for the following: Black Enterprise Women of Power Summit, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts, "To The Contrary," a nationally syndicated television program, the Women's Leadership Exchange and the Atlanta Women's Network. Previous advisory board memberships include: Prudential Insurance Company, Citizen and Southern Bank and Fleet Bank. Dr. Smith was appointed by former President William Clinton to the National Women's Business Council and by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to the United Nations Beijing Plus Five Conference delegation. She has served as a member of the National Judging Panel for the National Women's Hall of Fame Inductees, the US Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100, as a Trustee of the University of the District of Columbia, as a founding advisory board member of the United States Women's Chamber of Commerce and as a judge for Lifetime Television's Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Dr. Smith holds a Doctorate of Education in Social Policy Analysis from Harvard University, a Masters in Sociology from Emory University, a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Spelman College, and honorary doctorates from Spelman College and Texas College. She has received numerous awards and recognitions, including the Emory

University Alumni Medal, the American Association of University Women's Woman of Distinction Award, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Roy Wilkins Award, and the Johnnetta B. Cole Spelman College Alumnae Achievement Award. Dr. Smith has two sons and four grandchildren.