CHAPEL HILL, NC - James H. Ammons, provost and vice president for academic affairs of Florida A&M University since 1995, has been elected chancellor of North Carolina Central University by the Board of Governors of the 16-campus University of North Carolina. UNC President Molly Corbett Broad placed Ammons' name in nomination today (February 9) during the board's regular February meeting. Ammons, 48, will assume his new duties June 1, succeeding Julius H. Chambers, who announced last summer that he would retire at the end of this academic year after eight years in the post.

In recommending Ammons to the Board of Governors, Broad said: "James Ammons brings to North Carolina Central University great energy, enthusiasm, and more than two decades of solid, progressive administrative experience within a major public university system. He also brings a proven commitment to sustaining the special mission of historically black colleges and universities. The proud product of an HBCU, a distinctive signature of his leadership has been the ability to stimulate and manage significant enrollment growth while simultaneously raising academic quality and expectations. We are most fortunate to gain a leader with this wealth of talent and commitment."

A constituent of the ten-campus State University System of Florida, Florida A&M University is the largest single-campus historically black university in America. A comprehensive/doctoral institution, it currently offers 62 baccalaureate programs, 35 master's programs, ten doctoral programs, and professional programs in pharmacy, architecture, and law. Rated by Black Issues in Higher Education as the nation's number-one university in graduating African-Americans with baccalaureate and teaching degrees, FAMU's student enrollment has soared from 5,000 to more than 12,000 since 1985. This year it tied with Harvard in the number of National Achievement Scholars admitted, and it has previously been tapped as the Time/Princeton Review College of the Year.

A native of Winter Haven, Fla., Ammons earned his baccalaureate degree at FAMU, graduating in 1974 with a degree in political science. He then enrolled at Florida State University, earning a master's degree in public administration in 1975 and a doctorate in government in 1977.
Ammons began his academic career at the University of Central Florida, where he served as an assistant professor of public administration from 1977 to 1983 before returning to FAMU as a professor of political science. Over the course of his 17-year tenure at FAMU, Ammons has risen steadily through the administrative ranks, serving as assistant vice president for academic affairs from 1984-89. From 1987-1988, he also served as a faculty program consultant to the Board of Regents, leading a comprehensive review of the Florida system's nine political science programs.

In 1989, Ammons was promoted to associate vice president for academic affairs and director of Title III programs, a post he held until being named FAMU's chief academic officer in 1995. During his tenure as provost and vice president for academic affairs, the campus has witnessed unprecedented growth in student enrollment, freshman SAT/ACT scores, retention and graduation rates, and academic program offerings.

Active in professional and civic organizations, Ammons has received numerous awards and honors. He was named an American Council on Education Fellow and a CIGNA Foundation Fellow in 1986-87, a Booth Ferris Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1993, and a Nissan-Educational Testing Service Fellow in 2000. At FAMU, he has received the 1987 Distinguished Alumni Award and the 1999 Millennium Award.

Ammons was recently elected to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and has chaired numerous SACS accreditation review committees, including the 1999 SACS review of NCCU. He currently chairs the Editorial Board of the University Press of Florida and serves on the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' Task Force on the Professional Development of Teachers. He also has served on the boards of directors of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce and the Tallahassee Marine Institute, as well as on the Promotion Review Board of the Florida Highway Patrol.

Ammons is married to Judy Ammons, a second-grade teacher at the Florida State University School. They have one son, James H. III, a junior at FAMU majoring in building construction and a left-fielder on the FAMU baseball team.

North Carolina Central University

Founded in 1909 and chartered as the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua, North Carolina Central University was acquired by the state in 1923 and became the nation's first state-supported liberal arts institution for African-Americans. Maintaining a strong liberal arts tradition, NCCU is now a comprehensive university.
offering baccalaureate and master's level programs, as well as the first-professional degree in law. Fall 2000 enrollment was nearly 5,500. One of seven UNC campuses targeted for focused growth over the next decade, NCCU is embarking on a major capital program of building renovation and new construction.

The University of North Carolina

The oldest public university in the nation, the University of North Carolina enrolls more than 163,000 students and encompasses all 16 of North Carolina's public institutions that grant baccalaureate degrees. UNC campuses support a broad array of distinguished liberal-arts programs, two medical schools and one teaching hospital, two law schools, a veterinary school, a school of pharmacy, ten nursing programs, 15 schools of education, three schools of engineering, and a specialized school for performing artists. Also under the University umbrella are the UNC Center for Public Television with its 11-station statewide broadcast network, and the NC School of Science and Mathematics, the nation's first public residential high school for gifted students.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: An electronic version of this release and a photograph of Dr. Ammons may be found on the University of North Carolina website at http://www.northcarolina.edu/pres/news/news.cfm.

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