

2004

Honorary Degree Citation: Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole

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Granted 2004

DR. JOHNETTA BETSCH COLE

Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole is the 14th president of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina. Her career as a college and university professor and administrator spans over three decades. Dr. Cole made history in 1987 by becoming the first African-American woman to serve as president of Spelman College. In April 2004, she became the first African-American to serve as chair of the board of United Way of America.

Dr. Cole is president emerita of Spelman College and professor emerita at Emory University, from which she retired as a presidential distinguished professor of Anthropology, Women's Studies, and African-American Studies.

Dr. Cole began her college studies at Fisk University and completed her undergraduate degree at Oberlin College. She earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in anthropology from Northwestern University. She is the author of numerous publications for scholarly and general audiences including the book *Gender Talk: The Struggle for Women's Equality in African-American Communities*. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Anthropological Association.

Dr. Cole has a long and distinguished career as an educator and humanitarian. Her work as a college professor and president, her published works, her speeches, and her community service, consistently address issues of racial, gender, and all other forms of discrimination.

Dr. Cole serves on the board of the Carter Center, the National Visionary Leadership Project, and the United Way of Greater Greensboro. She also serves on the Board of Directors of Merck & Co., Inc., and the Atlanta Falcons. Dr. Cole consults on diversity matters with Chase Bank. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, The Links, Inc., and the National Council of Negro Women.

In addition to 48 honorary degrees, Dr. Cole has received numerous awards, including the TransAfrica Forum Global Public Service Award, the Dorothy I. Height Dreammaker Award, the Radcliffe Medal, the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Medal, the 2001 Alexis deTocqueville Award for Community Service from United Way of America, the Award for Education presented at the 90th Anniversary Celebrations of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and The Joseph Prize for Human Rights presented by the Anti-Defamation League.