

FAMU Investiture blends ceremony and celebration on campus

By Starr McKay | Staff Writer



TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida A&M University’s investiture ceremony for its 13th president drew formal speeches, historical reflection and a campus celebration that continued into the quad, where students gathered for food, music and conversation.

The ceremony marked the installation of President Marva Johnson as she begins her tenure leading the university.

During the investiture, Dr. Albert Mosley, president of Bethune-Cookman University, highlighted Johnson’s background in education policy, broadband access and state leadership.

“You arrive at this presidency with the background that is tailor made for this moment that FAMU faces,” Mosley said. “You know how power works. You know how legislators work.

You know how to build bridges and move resources. Madam President, FAMU needed exactly that.”

Mosley added that the broader Historically Black College and University community stands to benefit from Johnson’s leadership.

“Under your leadership, this university will advance strategic initiatives in research, academic quality and community engagement,” he said. “The Wildcats and Rattlers have been in each other’s corners for 100 years.”

Florida A&M University Student Government Association President Zayla Bryant also addressed the ceremony, reflecting on leadership and transition as she closed her term.

“Some experiences do not just change you, but they reveal you,” Bryant said. “Through my journey, I have learned lessons that sharpen my voice, strengthen my resolve and define the standard that I carry.”

Bryant spoke directly to the responsibility of leadership and change.

“Change is not optional. It is extremely necessary and more importantly it is ours to lead,” she said.

Following the formal ceremony, students, faculty, staff and guests gathered in the campus quad for an informal after celebration featuring refreshments and music.

For many students, the day was as much about community as it was about leadership.

“Yes, what brought me out to today’s ceremony was to see Marva and celebrate and congratulate her,” said Joshawna Williams, a third-year computer information systems student from San Diego, California. “This is my first time ever being here, so I have to go out and experience it.”

Some students said they came for both curiosity and connection.

“I just wanted to see what it was about and be part of the moment,” said Darius Collins, a sophomore political science student from Atlanta, Georgia. “You do not always get to see something like this on campus every day.”

For others, the investiture represented a transition in the university’s direction.

The ceremony highlighted Johnson’s appointment as she assumes leadership of Florida A&M University at a time of continued focus on academic growth and institutional development.

As the formal program ended, guests remained in the quad discussing the speeches, taking photos and sharing food, turning a ceremonial moment into a campus gathering.

For Williams, the experience reflected more than a leadership change.

“It felt important to be here and just see it happen,” she said.