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House of Representatives

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF DR. HENRY GIVENS, JR.

HON. CORI BUSH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2021

I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Henry Givens, Jr. He wore the hat of president of Harris-Stowe State University, and the memories we treasure of him are deeply precious and indeed innumerable. Before taking the helm at HSSU, Dr. Givens was a leader in the effort to integrate schools in St. Louis, and served as the first African American assistant commissioner for Missouri's Department of Education. He became the president at Harris-Stowe in 1979 and over the next thirty years, he tripled student enrollment, opened six new buildings and expanded the university's offerings to include more than a dozen degree programs. Under his leadership, Harris-Stowe was designated a historically Black college or university (HBCU) by the federal government in 1987. His three decades of service to the university speak volumes about his character, dedication, and his commitment to excellence. As a former Harris-Stowe student, I know firsthand the transformative influence Mr. Givens had on the campus. His vision and unrelenting tenacity transformed those halls from their beautifully humble beginnings to the competitive cutting-edge campus and university it is today. His accomplishments are no doubt a testament to who he was as a person and how he lived his life — fearless and unrelenting in the fight for equity in access to higher education for the most marginal among us.

I know he has left behind a host of family, friends, colleagues, and the entire St. Louis community who will miss him dearly. I join you in the grief of this loss. That said, I am immensely grateful that he has left behind an admirable legacy of passionate innovation. The rippling effects of his life's work are cemented into history and will unquestionably live on through the many lives he touched.

Job well done, Dr. Givens. We miss you already.

CORI BUSH

Member of Congress