

BENNETT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Noted Black Business Historian will Keynote Honors Convocation

Bennett College for Women will hold their annual Spring Honors Convocation on **Thursday, February 19, 2009 at 11:00 am** in the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel. The convocation, which is open to the public, is held to recognize and honor students for their academic achievement based on their Fall cumulative averages. Seniors must have a 3.40 or above GPA; juniors 3.30 or above; sophomores 3.20 or above and freshmen 3.00 or above. Over 75 Bennett students will be honored and 35 students from the Middle College at Bennett.

Dr. Juliet E. K. Walker, Professor in the Department of History at the University of Texas at Austin and Founding Director of the Center for Black Business History, Entrepreneurship and Technology (CBBH) at the University of Texas, is the featured speaker for this event.



A University of Chicago PhD, with postdoctoral work at Harvard University, Walker is author of *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship*, the first and only comprehensive scholarly study of African American business activities from the Colonial era to the late 1998. Also, she is author of some ninety published articles and essays and is the editor of the *Encyclopedia of African American Business History*.

Dr. Walker has pursued research on comparative black/minority business cultures in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, England, France, Belgium, Netherlands and West Germany. Her present research project is the book, *Oprah Winfrey: An American Entrepreneur* under contract with the Harvard University Business School Press. Dr. Walker is considered the foremost scholar in Black Business History and her research and publications are recognized as providing the foundation for Black Business history as a sub-field in African American history.

Dr. Walker's CBBH is the only University or private center or foundation that focuses on Black Business History. Professor Walker launched the Texas Black Business Hall of Fame in 2003 at the CBBH's first conference, "The Federal Government and Black Business." Professor Walker's work in developing the field of Black Business History began with her first book, *Free Frank: A Black Pioneer on the Antebellum Frontier*, which details the business and entrepreneurial activities of slave-born Frank (1777-1854), who used profits from his various enterprises to purchase sixteen family members from slavery, including himself in a forty-year period of time. Free Frank is Professor Walker's great great grandfather and was the first African American to legally plat a town, New Philadelphia, Illinois. The town's site is now a National Historical Landmark.

For more information, contact the Office of Public Relations/Publications at 336-517-2267.

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