

April 26, 2021

Dr. George T. French, President  
Clark Atlanta University  
CAU Board of Trustees  
223 James P Brawley Dr. SW  
Atlanta, GA 30314

**RE: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Naming of the Department of Political Science**

Dear Dr. French and the CAU Board of Trustees:

When I met Dr. Mack Henry Jones in August of 1971, it was as a graduate student in the newly minted Political Science Doctoral Program. I had just completed my first year of teaching American Government at James Monroe High School in Fredericksburg, VA. Before this, I completed a Master's in Education from the University of Virginia. There were only five African American graduate students and twelve law students on campus, historically the most prominent African American presence on the UVA campus. I was among the five graduate students who resided on campus where my social studies concentration required that I take Political Science courses. Having to experience insufferable racial microaggressions by my political science professors, I decided to further my graduate education at a historically black university such as Virginia State University, where I received my undergraduate degree. Dispirited by the UVA experiences and seniors at a predominantly white high school, I applied to the Atlanta University Department of Political Science to acquire a second Master's degree.

When I applied for admission into graduate school at Atlanta University, I was not aware that it had received a Ford Foundation Award to train African Americans with advanced degrees in Political Science. I was stunned when my application to enter the graduate program was answered with a letter from Dr. Mack Henry Jones awarding a three-year scholarship to receive the Ph.D. in Political Science. Thus, I became one of the first students to begin the program in the Fall of 1971. Little did I realize this decision would be the turning point in my professional career and a connection with the most outstanding nationally respected Black Political Scientists in the nation.

When I joined the Atlanta University Ph.D. program in Political Science, I quickly learned that my prior experiences as a graduate student would need substantial adjustments. I realized that the program had been designed by a remarkable academic leader who demanded a substantially higher level of critical thinking, a greater depth of analysis and problem solving, new paradigms for research approaches, and an unwavering commitment to teaching from a historically black perspective. I have closely watched as the Department continued to grow and sustain its



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commitment to the uniqueness of a political science pedagogy that has nurtured students for the past 50 years.

I fully support the Clark Atlanta University Department of Political Science branding as the Dr. Mack Henry Jones Department of Political Science. The impact of his rich legacy resonates throughout the United States and the world. This legacy will continue to play a dominant role in the Department's structure and momentum for the next 50 years and beyond. Graduates from the Department can be found among this nation's most forward-thinking leaders on university campuses, all levels of government, corporate board rooms, non-profit organization innovators, legal scholars, and many other notable professions and occupations.

Dr. Mack Henry Jones was the revolutionary builder behind the success of the Department of Political Science. His unrelenting commitment to the development of Black Political Scientists changed the trajectory of the Political Science Curriculum that empowered students to pursue academics with rigor and a profound commitment to the growth and development of the African American communities. Dr. Jones still harbors a life-long commitment to building a community of Black scholars to continue the struggle for economic, political, and social justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Gloria J. Braxton".

Gloria J. Braxton, Ph.D. '78  
Project Coordinator  
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University of Lynchburg  
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