

International gospel legend donates in-kind gift worth \$6 million to Tennessee State University

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Dr. Bobby Jones, international gospel music singer and alumnus of Tennessee State University (TSU), has donated an in-kind gift worth \$6 million to the university. To celebrate its appreciation, the university held a tribute to Dr. Jones on Friday, Nov. 6 at 5 p.m. at the Performing Arts Center on TSU’s main campus.

Dr. Jones has donated approximately 30 years of recordings, as well as exclusive rights, of his performances and television programs he hosted and produced on Black Entertainment Television (BET) cable network. The recordings, which will be used for scholarly research, have been professionally appraised collectively at \$6 million. The donation is the largest in-kind gift the university has received to date.

The donated recordings are currently being preserved and will be housed in TSU’s library. Members of the community will be welcome to check the recordings out from the library in the near future.

A well-known figure in the world of gospel music, Dr. Jones also serves as host and executive producer of “Bobby Jones Gospel” and producer of “Video Gospel,” two very popular programs on BET. “Bobby Jones Gospel” is the first and only nationally syndicated black gospel television show and has been on the air since 1980 when BET began. “Video Gospel” is the only national television program gospel artists have to show their music videos.

After receiving his bachelor’s degree in elementary education and master’s degree from TSU, Dr. Jones went on to receive a doctorate from Vanderbilt University. After appearing in many television programs and specials, Dr. Jones also received numerous awards, including an International Film Festival Award, the Gospel Music Association’s (GMA) Dove Award and a Grammy Award, among others.

“Tennessee State University holds a special place in my heart, so this gift reflects my appreciation for the place that helped me begin a career that I dreamed about as a child. I felt it

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was important to give something back to the institution that shaped me into who I am today, and this is a fantastic way to leave a legacy for future generations,” said Dr. Bobby Jones.

“We are thrilled to receive this generous gift from Dr. Jones. Not only will these recordings contain a wealth of information for our students, but this gift makes TSU the steward of important works from this genre while perpetually generating additional resources for the university,” said Dr. Melvin N. Johnson, Tennessee State University president.

For more information on Dr. Bobby Jones’ in-kind gift to Tennessee State University, contact Cheryl Bates-Lee, assistant vice president of marketing and public affairs at TSU, at (615) 963-5331 (office) or (615) 270-6234 (mobile) or cbateslee@tnstate.edu.