



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Jerry C. Johnson Foundation Establishes Endowed Scholarship for Student Athletes and Scholars at LeMoyne-Owen College

**MEMPHIS, TN** (Aug. 9, 2016) Legendary Coach Jerry C. Johnson and officials from The Jerry C. Johnson Foundation, Inc. presented LeMoyne-Owen College President Dr. Andrea Lewis Miller a \$25,000 check earlier today during a special ceremony to officially establish the Jerry C. Johnson Endowed scholarship at LeMoyne-Owen College. Each year, four students will receive scholarship dollars to help offset their college expenses.

Coach Jerry C. Johnson coached men's basketball and other sports for more than 40 years at LeMoyne-Owen College where he won the NCAA Division III National Championship in 1975, becoming the only African American coach to win the title since the championship was established over 40 years ago. To this day, he is the only coach in the state of Tennessee to ever win an NCAA men's national title. He also won several division and conference basketball titles.

"Coach Johnson's legacy is profound and the number of students and athletes he impacted over the years cannot be numbered," JCJ Foundation Chair Jesse Chatman said. "This scholarship is a fitting tribute to his legacy and ensures his impact will endure and grow in perpetuity."

"I cannot overstate the importance of scholarship support or the level of our gratitude for the Foundation's generosity," President Miller said. "Many of our students have an abundance of motivation and talent, but simply lack the financial resources to fulfill their academic dreams," she added. "Scholarship dollars often make the difference between graduation and a dream unfulfilled."

Coach Johnson was on hand for the ceremony, along with his son Dr. Jerry C. Johnson Jr. and several former Magicians he coached over the years. "I am truly honored and humbled," Coach Johnson said. "At 98 years old, it truly warms my heart to know that future Magicians will benefit from the success my players, students and I enjoyed over the years."

Each school year, proceeds from the Jerry C. Johnson Endowed Scholarship will be awarded to two student athletes and two scholars—a male and female in each category—who maintain at least a 2.5 GPA and qualify for federal Pell Grant assistance. Students who receive full Pell grant assistance, as well as state assistance in the form of Tennessee Promise and other lottery generated scholarships, still fall short financially on average of \$2,000 annually. "More than 90 percent of our students are Pell eligible, which is an indication of the great need for scholarship dollars to bridge the gap between their tuition, fees and other expenses and the grants they receive," President Miller said. "These scholarships are going to make a difference."

The Foundation raised the initial endowment funds at a benefit this past June that featured University of Memphis Men's Basketball Head Coach Tubby Smith as the keynote speaker. About 500 LeMoyne-Owen College alumni and Jerry C. Johnson supporters attended the event that marked Coach Johnson's 98th birthday. The Jerry C. Johnson Foundation exists to provide scholarships, educational, recreational, cultural, health and lifelong learning opportunities for youth and their families. To donate to the Jerry C. Johnson Endowed Scholarship, go online at [loc.edu](http://loc.edu) or call Frankie Jeffries at (901) 435-1530 for more information. For more information about the JCJ Foundation, contact Jeffrey Higgs at (901) 508-5027.

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