



For Immediate Release

April 17, 2011

Message from President McClaurin: A Prayer for Hope in the Face of Disaster

Dear Shaw Students and Parents,

Thank you for your courage in the face of one of Shaw University's most unpredictable disasters. I know that we will come through this crisis stronger and more self-assured than ever, as long as we work together as a community. I think we are blessed that despite tremendous structural damages to dormitories and the Willie Gary Student Union that not one single person (student, faculty, staff or community members) was injured. We can all give thanks for that.

I wish to thank the Shaw staff, alumni and community volunteers, City of Raleigh, the Mayor and City Councilmember Weeks, the Golden Corral, and the Raleigh Red Cross for rapidly responding to our request for assistance and setting up a temporary shelter to safely house our students while we assess the damages.

While I knew that the situation was adverse during the evening, daylight has revealed that it will be impossible for us to safely conduct classes and return to business as usual. Thus, I have made the difficult decision of suspending classes for the remainder of the semester. **Shaw University is officially closed as of noon on April 17, 2011.**

Students will be graded on the work they have accomplished to date. **The Math and English Competency Exam requirements are suspended for this semester only.** Shaw students will be assisted in making arrangements to return home. Fiscal Affairs will be available to answer questions on how to clear your financial obligations for graduation and returning next semester. Construction and cleaning crews have worked all evening to make the campus as safe as possible given the circumstances; but, we must proceed cautiously and patiently, because of structural damages to dormitories and uprooted trees. After an assessment by experts, I will determine if summer school can be held on campus or will be available only online.

Commencement will be held as planned on May 7 at the Dorton Arena in Raleigh. Former Congressman Bob Etheridge has agreed to give the commencement address. I wish each and every one of you a safe passage home, and ask that you say a strong prayer of hope for Shaw University. I am confident that this institution will return stronger and better than before. I look forward to seeing you each next semester. Please refer to our website (www.shawu.edu) for further updates.

Peace and Blessings,

Irma McClaurin, PhD
President

Shaw University was founded in 1865 and is the oldest historically black university in the south. Shaw University is a private, co-educational liberal arts University, that awards degrees at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The primary mission of Shaw University is teaching with the commitment to maintain excellence in research and academic programs that foster intellectual enhancement and technological skills.