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CONTACT:

John Gordon, Jr. (UDC) – (202) 701-8805; john.gordon@udc.edu



Mayor Bowser and UDC Celebrate New Institute of Policy, Politics, and History

New Nonpartisan Institute Will Provide Students Extracurricular Opportunities to Engage with Respected Practitioners of Politics and Public Policy

(WASHINGTON, DC) – Today, University of the District of Columbia President Ronald Mason, Jr. was joined by Mayor Muriel Bowser and to celebrate the launch of the new Institute of Politics, Policy, and History (IPPH). Mayor Bowser and President Ronald Mason, Jr. have asked former Mayor Sharon Pratt to lead the effort to build out the programming for IPPH and to ensure that the institute becomes a stand-alone, self-sustaining entity by October 2019.

"I have called on UDC, the business community, and District leaders to affirm a path to UDC's ascendance as a first choice two-year and four-year institution for DC's best and brightest, and I look forward to seeing how this institute plays a role in that work," said Mayor Bowser. "Through the Institute of Politics, Policy, and History, we can tap into the experiences of our residents, leaders, and communities to give more Washingtonians the opportunity to participate in building a stronger and more inclusive Washington, DC."

The new nonpartisan institute will provide students extracurricular opportunities to interact with respected practitioners of politics and public policy. In addition, IPPH will introduce students to careers in policy and politics—two economic engines of Washington, DC.

"As the public University in and for the District, we are honored to partner in the establishment of this Institute," said President Ronald Mason. "It offers an opportunity for our students and faculty, as well as the citizens of this community and the nation, to study and celebrate the unique past, present and future of the nation's capital."

Through its curriculum, IPPH will provide a focus on the unique history of Washington, DC. The institute will harvest, showcase, and celebrate the many narratives and communities of the District, from the city's founding through today, with a goal of making the data points within the DC Archives accessible and engaging to contemporary audiences. Additionally, IPPH will engage practitioners of politics and public policy as well as historians to examine the touchstone issues of the day, illuminated with insights from local and national history.

The institute will consist of five programs that will be developed and rolled out between the spring of 2019 and the fall of 2020:

1. **Speakers Series:** International, national, and local policy/political thought leaders "drill down" on critical issues impacting the District, nation, and world. UDC's IPPH will distinguish itself by often infusing these contemporary conversations with interesting highlights of District history. For example, one potential topic,

“A Nation Divided” where speakers reflect on the significant shifts to the right and left evidenced in 2018 mid-term elections, while contrasting the same with pre-Civil War Washington, D.C.

2. Resident Fellows: Individuals possessing practical, exceptional subject-matter expertise within important facets of life in Washington, DC will serve a full academic year. Fellows will organize significant student-focused events throughout the academic year and contribute to the District of Columbia Archives by assembling essays and film/photographic highlights within their spheres of focus.
3. Internship Program: UDC students will be placed with nonprofit, public, and private sector organizations focused on politics and policy.
4. Visiting Fellows: Respected former elected and appointed officials and other practitioners will host weekly seminars, engage with students, and participate in other IPPH events for one semester.
5. Comparative “Newly Minted” Democracies Program: Speaker series that highlight the challenges of newly-minted democracies of the world while contrasting the same with the District government of 1973.

“IPPH will serve as an important platform for celebrating the history of our city, while inspiring spirited conversations around the tough issues challenging our country from its birth,” said IPPH’s founding Director and former District Mayor, Sharon Pratt. “While there are other institutes of politics, IPPH will distinguish itself by imbuing all programs with insights garnered from the DC Archives and other historical repositories focused on the history of Washington, DC. Washington, DC is a unique city, created by the Founding Fathers to support a new nation. Washington, DC’s story is a many-faceted story of a City created by a new Nation—expressing her promise and her conflicted struggle to become the ‘more perfect union.’”

The Institute’s Senior Advisory Committee consists of distinguished individuals who will provide strategic guidance around IPPH programs and endowment. The Senior Advisory Committee will be led by co-chairs Michael Steele, political commentator and former RNC chairman, and Karen Tramontano, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer at Blue Star Strategies and former Deputy Chief of Staff to President Clinton.

Other Senior Advisory Committee Members will include Beverly Perry, Senior Advisor to the Mayor; the Honorable Charlene Drew Jarvis, UDC Board of Trustees; Mark Thompson, XM Sirius Host and UDC Alumnus; Sonia Gutierrez, President Emeritus and Founder of Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School; and Dr. April Massey, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

“I’m honored to welcome the Institute to CAS and to partner with former Mayor Pratt in creating high impact learning opportunities for students across the University,” said Dr. Massey. “The institute will bridge the intellectual and physical resources of the city with the academic programs of the University and offer our students, faculty, staff, and alumni unique opportunities to engage with some of the foremost experts, practitioners, and public scholars of our time. The Institute’s mission and resources align seamlessly with the University’s strategic initiatives and will enhance our work toward developing exemplars in the liberal arts, applied research, and experiential education.”

Through the IPPH, the University of the District of Columbia will introduce a new generation to the practice of politics and unearth narratives around the history of our unique capital city.

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