The Fisk Jubilee Singers from Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., will perform on March 29 at First Baptist Church as part of the ABAC Presents! Performing Arts Series. This event will also include lectures about the singers on March 25-26.

**ABAC Performing Arts Series Features Fisk Jubilee Singers on March 29**

**TIFTON**— The Fisk Jubilee Singers from Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., will perform on March 29 at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Tifton as part of the “ABAC Presents! Performing Arts Series” at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.
The Fisk Jubilee Singers were formed in 1871 at Fisk University, one of the most prestigious Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Just one year later, the group was performing at the White House. Over their 143-year history, the Singers have come to be recognized as a world authority in the singing of spirituals, as important artistically as they are historically. They have sung for Presidents, Kings and Princes, as well as heads of state throughout the world numerous times.

While available tickets will be sold at the door on the day of the event, Series Director Wayne Jones encourages advance purchase of tickets to ensure seating for patrons. Individual tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for students under 18 years of age. Tickets can be purchased online at www.purplepass.com/fisk or by phone at (229) 391-4895.

The Fisk Jubilee Singers, under the direction of Dr. Paul Kwami, will work with the ABAC Chamber Choir under the direction of Dr. Susan Roe, Professor of Voice and Director of Choral Music; the Colquitt County High School (CCHS) A Cappella Chorus under the direction of Travis Kern; and the Tift County High School (TCHS) Choirs under the direction of Joanie Padgett for the March 29th event.

Kwami was born in Ghana, West Africa, where his musical training started under his late father, T. W. Kwami. He enrolled as a student at Fisk University in 1983 and joined the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Kwami graduated from Fisk in 1985 and continued his music studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Mich., earning the Master of Music degree in 1987. He then received the Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) degree in conducting from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Ill.
In 1994, Kwami was named Musical Director of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, becoming the first African to hold this position and the first to serve as Curb/Beaman Chair of the Fisk Jubilee Singers. He also served as the Chairman of the Fisk Music Department from 1996 to 2003.

Kwami will lead a residency in Tifton beginning on March 26 to work with the ABAC Chamber Choir, CCHS, and TCHS for the performance on March 29. This residency will educate both the students and the public regarding the historical significance of the African American Spiritual and will also include workshops and local high school choir rehearsals with Kwami.

Jones said ABAC received one of only five awards from South Arts for the Fisk Jubilee Singers Special Initiative grant for this residency. The Fisk Jubilee Singers will arrive early on the day of their performance to practice with the groups as well.

Introductory lectures about the history of the Fisk Jubilee Singers by Dr. Toni Anderson, professor of vocal studies at LaGrange College, will also be a part of the residency. Anderson, acclaimed for many published writings, is the winner of the 47th Georgia Author of the Year Award for her book “Tell Them We Are Singing for Jesus: The Original Fisk Jubilee Singers and Christian Reconstruction, 1871-1878,” a social history of the choral ensemble, published by Mercer University Press.

Anderson will hold three introductory lectures in Tifton and on the campus of ABAC on March 25-26. Titled “The Story of the Fisk Jubilee Singers,” the lectures will be held on March 25 at 2 p.m. in the TCHS Performing Arts Center and at 7 p.m. in Howard Auditorium on the campus of ABAC. The third session will take place on March 26 at 7 p.m. at the Shiloh Missionary Church, Tifton. All lectures are free of charge.
The lectures will include a brief overview of the abolition movement, the formation of the American Missionary Association, the founding of Fisk University, the birth of the Jubilee Singers, and the ensemble's struggles, triumphs, and significant contribution to the advancement of civil rights.

“ABAC Presents!” is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. The series is also supported, in part, by a generous grant from South Arts. GCA and South Arts also receive support from their partner agency, the National Endowment for the Arts.

The final performance in this series will feature jazz saxophonist Roger Pemberton on April 17 at 7 p.m. in Howard Auditorium. To learn more about the series, interested persons can visit the “ABAC Presents!” web page at http://www.abac.edu/more/arts-connection/abac-presents-performing-arts-series.

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