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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Heritage University Announces Next President**

Toppenish, WA - The Heritage University Board of Directors has appointed Dr. John Bassett as the 2<sup>nd</sup> president of Heritage University. Dr. Bassett currently serves as the president of Clark University in Worcester, MA, a position he has held since 2000. Dr. Bassett will begin his new duties at Heritage next summer, 2010.

Clark University was founded in 1887 and was the first all graduate institution in America. It currently serves a combined undergraduate and graduate student body of 3,000. Under Dr. Bassett's leadership, Clark has received wide acclaim for its innovative University Park Campus School (UPCS), a small urban public school (7<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup>) grade, nationally recognized as one of the 100 best public high schools in the country. Over 99% of UPCS graduates have passed Massachusetts' rigorous graduation exam, over 95% go on to attend college, nearly all of them as first-generation college students.

In announcing the selection Paul Moulton, chairman of the board said, "Heritage University has always been fortunate to have as president a nationally recognized leader and a visionary committed to bringing higher education within reach of those with the desire and commitment to succeed. Dr. Bassett continues that visionary tradition and will lead Heritage to even greater achievements. . He brings to Heritage and our students the skills, experience and unique abilities that make him the perfect person to lead Heritage at this important time in our history."

Prior to his career at Clark, Dr. Bassett was the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of English at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland from 1993-2000. He is a scholar and teacher of American literature and has published 11 books and more than 30 professional articles, including a new annotated bibliography of recent criticism on William Faulkner. He is a nationally recognized leader in higher

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education and currently the vice chair and chair elect of the 800-member National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

“I can think of no greater calling than to lead Heritage University.” said Bassett “Higher education is the foundation for our future success as a society. Heritage was founded on the belief that no one should be denied access for reasons of poverty, culture or geography. My wife Kay and I are thrilled by the opportunity to live in the Pacific Northwest and build on the work of Dr. Ross.”

Heritage University was founded in 1982 by two Native American women with a vision of providing educational opportunities to talented and aspiring students of all backgrounds. To realize this dream they recruited Dr. Kathleen Ross as the founding president. Heritage University has six locations across the state of Washington, enrolls 1,400 students annually in bachelor’s and master’s degree programs, and has nearly 7,000 alumni. The student population includes 45% Hispanic and 15% Native American, and 85% of students are the first in their family to go to college.

For more information or to schedule an interview with the new president, contact Michael Moore, vice president for Advancement, at 509-865-8585 or [moore\\_m@heritage.edu](mailto:moore_m@heritage.edu) .

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