

Haste to Rise

A Remarkable Experience of Black Education during Jim Crow

David Pilgrim and Franklin Hughes

Preface: David Eisler

Between 1910 and the mid-1920s, more than sixty black students from the South bravely traveled north to Ferris Institute, a small, mostly white school in Big Rapids, Michigan. They came to enroll in college programs and college preparatory courses—and to escape, if only temporarily, the daily and ubiquitous indignities suffered under the Jim Crow racial hierarchy. They excelled in their studies and became accomplished in their professional fields. Many went on to both ignite and help lead the explosive civil rights movement. Very few people know their stories—until now.

Haste to Rise is a book about the incredible resiliency and breathtaking accomplishments of those students. It was written to unearth, contextualize, and share their stories and important lessons with this generation. Along the way we are introduced to dozens of these Jim Crow-era students, including the first African American to win a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, Belford V. Lawson, the lead attorney in *New Negro Alliance v. Sanitary Grocery Co.* (1938), a landmark court battle that safeguarded the right to picket. We also meet one of Lawson's contemporaries, Percival L. Prattis, a pioneering journalist and influential newspaper executive. In 1947, he became the first African American news correspondent admitted to the U.S. House and Senate press galleries. There is also an in-depth look into the life and work of the Institute's founder, Woodbridge Nathan Ferris, a racial justice pioneer who created educational opportunities for women, international students, and African Americans.

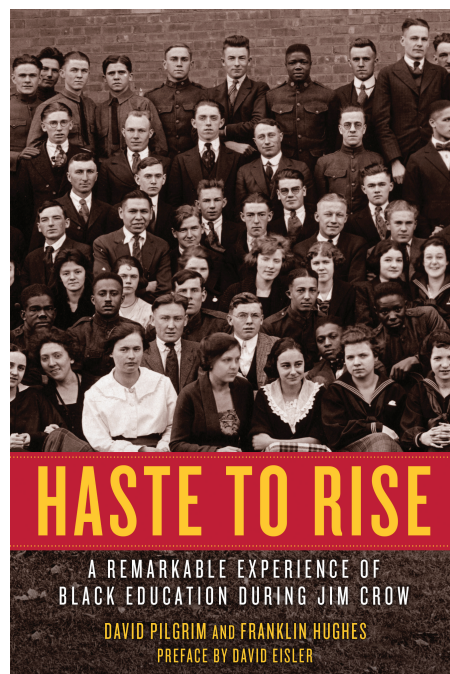
Haste to Rise is a challenge to others to look beyond a university's official history and seek a more complete knowledge of its past. This is American history done right!

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

David Pilgrim is a public speaker and one of America's leading experts on issues relating to multiculturalism, diversity, and race relations. He is best known as the founder and curator of the Jim Crow Museum, a thirteen-thousand-piece collection of racist artifacts located at Ferris State University. A professor of sociology at Ferris State, Pilgrim is also head of Diversity and Inclusion. He is the author of *Understanding Jim Crow* and *Watermelons, Nooses, and Straight Razors*.

Franklin Hughes is a multimedia specialist for the Diversity and Inclusion Office at Ferris State University. He is the primary content creator of audio and video for the Jim Crow Museum and also maintains the website and social media platforms. Hughes has been a member of the Jim Crow Museum team since fall 2011 and has written many articles for the museum's website.

David Eisler has served as president of Ferris State University since July 2003. He believes the higher education experience should prepare students for successful careers, create a pattern of intellectual rigor, develop a commitment to community engagement, and provide the foundation for lifelong learning.



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