



## Shelby Scholars Lecture Series

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### ROBERT E. WITT

*Former Chancellor of The University of Alabama System*

*Former President of The University of Alabama*

#### ABOUT OUR GUEST

Robert E. Witt retired as Chancellor of The University of Alabama System in 2016, a role he held since 2012. Prior to this, he served as president of The University of Alabama, where he oversaw significant growth in student enrollment, academic quality, and a transformative campus construction program.

Witt earned a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Bates College, an MBA from Dartmouth, and a Ph.D. in business administration from Penn State. A Connecticut native, he joined The University of Alabama in 2003 after an impactful eight years at the University of Texas-Arlington, where he led a remarkable turnaround. His academic career began in 1968 at the University of Texas, Austin, where he progressed from faculty to dean of the business school, which was ranked among the top seven globally by the Wall Street Journal.

In 1995, Witt briefly served as interim president of UT-Arlington before being appointed permanent president in 1996. As Chancellor of The University of Alabama System, he oversaw three campuses and the UAB Health System, collectively contributing over \$8 billion annually to Alabama's economy.

Witt's civic engagement is noteworthy; he has chaired the Council of Presidents of Alabama's colleges and universities and was part of the Governor's College and Career Ready Task Force. He served on the United Way of Tuscaloosa 2016 Campaign and held leadership roles in the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama and the Tuscaloosa County Industrial Development Board.

He has been recognized for understanding the importance of athletics in enhancing a university's visibility. Under his leadership, Alabama hired football coach Nick Saban, who brought six national championships to the university in 13 years.

Witt has received multiple accolades, including induction into the Tuscaloosa County Civic Hall of Fame in 2015 and the Alabama Academy of Honor in 2011, which recognizes 100 distinguished living Americans for their service to the state. Most recently, he was inducted into the National Collegiate Wheelchair Basketball Intercollegiate Division Hall of Fame for his advocacy of adaptive athletic programs.

Dr. Witt and his wife, Sandee Kirby Witt, have three children and five grandchildren. His legacy reflects a commitment to education, community service, and sportsmanship.

*Monday, October 28, 2024  
4 PM at Tuomey Hall*