

HBCU CONNECT

on campus

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

CRAFTING A STAND-OUT RESUME!

A STRATEGIC
GUIDE FOR
HBCU STUDENTS.

“BIGGER THAN US,”
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RINGS TRUE WITH
HISTORIC WIN.

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WHAT'S UP HBCU FAMILY!?

Spring is here, and as we gear up for summer vibes, It's a pleasure to welcome you to our latest edition of HBCU Connect Magazine!

In this edition, we spotlight Spelman College's innovative approach to STEM education with the introduction of Cosmetic Chemistry programs. We also pay tribute to Clarice Phelps, a role model for Black women in science.

Graduation gown hung up, diploma in hand... Now what? Don't worry, HBCU Connect is here to guide you through that exciting (and maybe a little nerve-wracking) job hunt. We've got your back with strategic tips to craft a resume that'll make you stand out from the crowd and a funding guide for aspiring Black entrepreneurs.

By the way, did you know our scholarships section got a makeover? It's packed with opportunities for students and grads. Take a peek and see what's out there—it could be just what you need!

Sports achievements shine brightly as Talladega and Howard University make history in gymnastics and figure skating, proving that HBCUs excel in all arenas. And let's not forget the remarkable success of Fisk Gymnast, setting new records and raising the bar for HBCU athletics.

As we chart the course forward, let's remain united in our commitment to progress and empowerment. Thank you for your continued support and remember to stay connected with HBCU CONNECT!

Much love and respect,

Will Moss

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BEAUTY MEETS SCIENCE!



Spelman College Introduces Cosmetic Chemistry in STEM Programs

In a move to broaden the scope of its STEM education, Spelman College now offers courses in cosmetic chemistry, making it the first HBCU to offer such a curriculum. Starting next fall, chemistry majors can specialize in cosmetic chemistry, while all students can minor in cosmetic science.

Dr. Pamela Scott-Johnson, Spelman's Provost, emphasizes the significance of this expansion, addressing the lack of representation in the beauty industry despite Black women's substantial consumer presence. With \$6.6 billion spent by Black Americans on beauty in 2021, the program aims to bridge this gap.

Dr. Leyte Winfield, professor of chemistry and biochemistry, highlights the program's focus on molecular sciences related to product formulation. It will also offer a culturally relevant perspective on black hair and skin care, addressing industry demands.

Since its introduction as a remote study option in January 2023, Spelman's cosmetic science curriculum has seen a significant application increase, indicating the program's promising future.

The institution anticipates high student interest and foresees numerous research collaborations in this emerging field.

HONORING CLARICE PHELPS, A Role Model for Black Women in Science



Clarice Phelps, a Tennessee State University alumna, made history as the first Black woman to contribute to discovering a new element from the periodic table. Officially named Tennessine (Ts), it holds the 117th position on the periodic table, marking a significant milestone.

Her journey began with childhood experiments in her Nashville kitchen, fostering a passion for chemistry during high school. After earning her chemistry degree from TSU, Phelps pursued a Master's in Nuclear and Radiation Engineering at UT Austin. After serving four



years in the Navy, where she utilized her expertise in handling radioactive materials, Phelps joined the Oak

Ridge National Laboratory.

"At Oak Ridge, I conducted purification work," Phelps explained. "It was a critical step in the discovery process."

In 2019, Phelps received the groundbreaking recognition. Reflecting on her journey, she emphasizes the importance of representation in STEM fields. "The most significant challenge is being seen, heard, supported, and respected. It has been my experience that you are relatively invisible in the scientific community if you are a Black woman."

As she continues her doctoral studies in Nuclear Engineering, she remains committed to advocating for diversity and inclusivity in scientific endeavors.

FISK UNIVERSITY'S MORGAN PRICE

Becomes first HBCU athlete to win national title in gymnastics

Morgan Price, a gymnast at Fisk University, has become the first athlete from an HBCU to win a national collegiate gymnastics championship. Price took the top prize in the USA Gymnastics women's collegiate all-around competition where she scored a 39.225. She had been offered a full scholarship at the University of Arkansas, but her family ties and heritage pulled her to Fisk.

"It felt really amazing," Price told "Good Morning America" of her historic win. "I'm very honored to be on such an amazing team, being part of the first ever HBCU gymnastics team and being the first HBCU gymnast to win [an] all-around national title. It really means everything to me."

Fisk University launched the first gymnastics team at an HBCU in 2022 and head coach Corrinne Tarver, who was the first Black gymnast to win an NCAA all-around title in 1989, has been leading the team since then.

Price said she's aware young girls, especially young Black girls, look up to her as a role model and she encourages them to follow their dreams.

"Never give up, especially when it gets hard," Price said. "Nothing is just easy or given to you so you have to work for everything that you want. So keep working hard, don't give up and ask for help if you need it."

Photo credit: USA Gymnastics and West Chester Golden Rams.



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CRAFTING A STAND-OUT RESUME.

A Strategic Guide for HBCU Graduates

So, you're about to graduate, eager to launch your career. But in a sea of resumes, standing out requires a strategic approach. This guide goes beyond generic advice, focusing on crafting a document that grabs recruiter's attention.

Make a Strong First Impression.

The header should include your contact details, a compelling headline (e.g., "Data Analyst seeking entry-level role"), and optionally, your LinkedIn profile. Summary: Briefly showcase your relevant skills and experiences tailored to the target position.

Embrace Minimalism: Focus on conveying impact using concise and clear sentences. The worst thing you can do is try to sound smart.

Quantify Your Achievements:

Go beyond listing duties. Highlight the impact of your work with measurable results (e.g., "Increased website traffic by 20%").

Limited Experience? No Problem.

Prioritize skills and workflows over the experience section by using a functional layout resume, emphasizing these elements over the experience section.

Readability is Key: Recruiters spend seconds scanning resumes. Whitespace is your friend. Use clear fonts, concise language, and bullet points for easy reading.

Your resume is your marketing tool. By following these tips, you'll craft a resume that highlights your unique skills and makes recruiters take notice. Now go land that dream job!

THRIVING BEYOND STATISTICS.

A Funding Guide for Black Entrepreneurs

When it comes to funding Black-owned businesses, there are some hard truths and statistics you need to know: Over 161,000 Black-owned companies employ 1 million Americans approximately, yet they face significant hurdles in securing funding compared to white counterparts, even with similar credit profiles. The disparity comes from systematic racism and the expanding racial wealth gap.

Fortunately, there are funds available to help fund your entrepreneurial dreams. You can finance your endeavor through different outlets, including business loans and grants to private equity firms and government programs.

When navigating funding options, consider the needed amount and repayment terms. Research multiple lenders, prequalify for loans, and beware of interest rates and fees. For urgency, consider fast loans, but explore all options, including partnering with investors or seeking alternative financing. The key is to make informed decisions that align with your goals.

As consumers, we have the power to uplift and support Black-owned businesses. By budgeting money for spending at Black-owned establishments, promoting them on social media, and shopping locally, you contribute to their success and economic empowerment.



MEET RAJAH CARUTH

A senior at a North Carolina public HBCU and a NASCAR rising star.

Caruth's passion for racing began with the popular game "Cars." He honed his skills through online racing simulators, eventually landing a spot in NASCAR's Drive for Diversity program. The program became a launchpad, propelling him from virtual tracks to real-world competitions.

Caruth's dedication and talent paid off in a big way. He recently secured his first NASCAR Truck Series win at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, becoming the first HBCU student and third African American driver to achieve this feat.

A senior at Winston-Salem State University (HBCU) in North Carolina, Caruth is on track to graduate this year. In addition to carrying a full course load, he travels around the country to race nearly every weekend from February to September.

Caruth admits that balancing academics and racing is not always easy. But through discipline and prioritization, he has found a way to succeed in both realms, proving that with determination, anything is possible.

Driven by a vision of a more inclusive NASCAR future, Caruth races beyond personal victory. Determined, he sets his sights on future races, pushing boundaries and exceeding expectations in his relentless pursuit of racing success.



Talladega College's gymnastics team has secured its place in history as the first Historically Black College or University (HBCU) to claim an NCAA Team Competition title. This remarkable achievement comes just over a year after the program's official announcement in January 2023.

On February 9th, Talladega College excelled at the Centenary College Gymnastics Meet in Shreveport, Louisiana. Competing against Centenary and Alaska, the team showcased their skills across various disciplines, with standout performances from Kyrstin Johnson, Alexa Chuy, and Kiora Peart-Williams.

Head coach Aja Sims-Fletcher expressed immense pride in her team's groundbreaking accomplishment, emphasizing its significance for minority athletes, particularly in a sport where opportunities can be limited. The team's motto, "BTU: Bigger Than Us," reflects their collective mission to transcend boundaries and inspire future generations.

The win is the culmination of a remarkable debut season. The Tornados have faced formidable opponents, including established programs like the University of Alabama and fellow HBCU, Fisk University. Despite the challenges, they continue to shine and make their mark in collegiate gymnastics.

Talladega's triumph embodies dedication, perseverance, and inclusivity. It rewrites the script for collegiate gymnastics, proving that anything is achievable through hard work and a strong community.

ADVANCING BLACK PATHWAYS



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Howard University Debuts First-Ever **HBCU FIGURE SKATING TEAM**



“Black people don’t skate.” – they told figure skating coach Jordan McCreary Graham when she tried to start a club at North Carolina Central University. However, two of her students are now proving this notion wrong.

Maya James and Cheyenne Walker founded the Howard University Ice Skating Team, the first figure skating club at an HBCU. Their efforts led the team to make history by competing in their inaugural collegiate competition on February 24th, 2024. This milestone marked the first time an HBCU participated in an intercollegiate figure skating competition or any U.S. Figure Skating event.

Despite limited access to ice time in DC, Howard’s skaters remain dedicated. They’ve trained at local rinks and even traveled to Maryland for practice sessions. Now, the Howard team is getting support from a non-profit, Diversify Ice. The organization is helping the club pay for ice time and providing the team with coaches, such as Graham, who was impressed by what James and Walker have achieved.

“The fact that they’re at an HBCU skating and it’s affordable for girls of all colors to be out there to skate and represent their school is amazing to me,” Graham said.

Howard skaters like Toni Smith are excited to represent their school on the ice. They aspire to see more HBCUs embrace figure skating, aiming to make history and inspire others to join them.

Top 50 Employers for HBCU Students



1. JPMorgan Chase
2. Johnson & Johnson
3. Visa
4. Giant Eagle, Inc.
5. Wells Fargo
6. Pfizer
7. Virginia Economic Development Partnership
8. Walgreens
9. Bristol Myers Squibb
10. MassMutual
11. ServiceNow
12. Fidelity Investments
13. Agilent Technologies
14. NFP Corp.
15. Supernal
16. CBRE
17. 84.51 LLC
18. Best Buy
19. GE Appliances
20. LULU Lemon
21. Erie Insurance
22. Ansys
23. U.S. Dept. of Veterans Health Administration
24. Pearson
25. Motorola Solutions, Inc.
26. SCRIPPS Research
27. Truist
28. University of Rochester
29. HP
30. Bunge Limited
31. SPX Technologies
32. Fluence Energy
33. CF Industries Holdings, Inc
34. Hackensack Meridian Health
35. The Washington Center
36. Amazon Services LLC
37. Microsoft
38. Deloitte Services LP
39. Maximus
40. UVA Health
41. Rent A Center
42. Tetrattech
43. Albemarle Corporation
44. Bank of America
45. Danaher
46. Sinclair Broadcasting Group
47. Nintendo of America
48. The Coca Cola Company
49. Cardinal Health
50. Thomson Reuters

A WAVE OF SUPPORT

Propels HBCUs Forward. New Programs, Improved Facilities, and Community Focus.



HBCUs nationwide are flourishing thanks to recent gifts and grants, fueling program launches, campus revitalization, and community development. Let's celebrate their success!

1. LeMoyne-Owen College — LeMoyne-Owen College received a \$75,000 grant to launch a men's volleyball program over the next three years, becoming the 7th HBCU in its conference to offer it.

2. Virginia Union University — Virginia Union University (VUU) secured a \$42 million grant from The Steinbridge Group for a 2-acre housing project in Richmond. The project will provide 130 new affordable homes, aligning with VUU's campus revitalization efforts to improve the community's living experience.

3. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore — The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) received a \$4.6 million grant from the US Department of Education to propel research in AI, climate change, sustainability, and healthcare over four years. This funding targets achieving R1 research status, solidifying UMES's status as a leader in innovation.

4. Claflin University — Claflin University, South Carolina's oldest HBCU, secured a \$1.8 million grant to bolster its CU-DEEP Wellness Initiative. This program tackles health disparities in rural and minority communities, building on Claflin's strong commitment to public health.

5. Livingstone College — Livingstone College (Salisbury, NC) secured \$3 million in anonymous donations over six months. This windfall empowers them to address needs, enhance academics, expand scholarships, and invest in facilities and technology, underscoring strong support for their mission to educate students and empower the community.

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HBCU Athletics Gains Momentum.

Wilberforce Announces

NEW GYMNASTICS PROGRAM

Wilberforce University is taking a significant step forward in collegiate athletics by launching its inaugural women's gymnastics team in partnership with Brown Girls Do Gymnastics (BGDG). This historic move, following the recent introduction of women's soccer and volleyball programs, underlines Wilberforce's commitment to providing diverse athletic opportunities.

President Dr. Vann R. Newkirk emphasizes the university's dedication to diversity in sports and empowering future generations of gymnasts through this collaboration with BGDG.

The new gymnastics program at Wilberforce University is set to commence in January 2026, offering a platform for athletes to showcase their skills and proudly represent their school.

Wilberforce University and Brown Girls Do Gymnastics (BGDG) are taking a concrete step towards their commitment to diversity and inclusion in athletics by hosting Camp Isla™ on campus. This exciting gymnastics camp, taking place June 20th to 23rd, 2024, aims to empower young athletes by nurturing their talents, boosting their motivation, and fostering a strong sense of community.

Wilberforce's milestone adds to the growing momentum of gymnastics programs at HBCUs. Talladega College recently announced its own gymnastics team, highlighting the positive impact of initiatives like BGDG and the HBCU Gymnastics Alliance in expanding opportunities for minority athletes.



DIVIDED LOYALTIES?

HBCU Students Seek Institutional Support for Palestinians.



For Amerah Laban, a senior nursing student at Howard University, the conflict between Israel and Gaza hits close to home. Amidst the chaos, she anxiously awaits a statement of support from her HBCU, a gesture she believes may never come.

While universities like Harvard and Georgetown have spoken out, Howard's response has been notably absent. Students like Laban express disappointment at the silence of HBCUs, including Howard, regarding the recent conflict despite a shared history of civil rights activism.

Howard's silence contrasts with its past support for causes like divestment from companies linked to Israeli occupation, a stance rejected by former president Patrick Swygert in 2007.

Despite historical ties between HBCUs and Jewish communities, some students feel the need to advocate for Palestinian rights. Dr. Greg Carr, a Howard professor, acknowledges the difficulty HBCUs face in balancing values and financial interests.

As HBCU students nationwide step up their activism for Palestine, they urge universities to take a stand. North Carolina A&T and Spelman have yet to make public statements.

"Although HBCUs are supposed to be a hub for Black people to convene – all skin folk ain't kin folk – there are people who want to maintain structures of capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism even if it is against their own self-interest because of their investments in these things," said Ziora Ajeroh, a senior sociology student at North Carolina A&T.

CHARTING THE COURSE:

A Task Force Evaluates the Future of Mississippi's HBCUs



A bill proposing the closure of three Mississippi universities, including three HBCUs, was met with public opposition and ultimately shelved. Senator John Polk's bill intended to address declining enrollment but faced backlash for potentially targeting Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) more severely.

Instead, a new initiative emerged. Senate Bill 2725, introduced by Senator Nicole Boyd, proposes a task force to scrutinize the efficacy of the State's eight public schools, including HBCUs. The group will analyze factors like enrollment trends, graduation rates, and student retention after graduation.

Amidst discussions surrounding Senate bills, it's essential to acknowledge the significant contributions of Mississippi's HBCUs. Mississippi Valley State, Alcorn State, and Jackson State Universities are economic drivers in their local and regional communities.

A report by the United Negro College Fund reveals the massive economic footprint of these institutions. The three universities generate over \$600 million annually, including university spending (faculty, programs, operations) and the additional boost from student dollars spent in nearby communities.

The task force's findings hold the key to Mississippi's higher education future. While closure threats linger, a collective resolve to protect the State's higher education institutions prevails.



UNCENSORED BLACK HISTORY EDUCATION

Thrives at Florida's Only HBCU

In the heart of South Florida, at Florida Memorial University (FMU), Professor Msomi Moor welcomes students to his African American History class with a meaningful greeting: "Welcome Black." As South Florida's only private HBCU, FMU's classrooms can operate freely from the state's anti-woke legislation. Moor's greeting highlights the centrality of Blackness, crucial in a state where Black history often faces erasure or distortion.

HBCUs like FMU are safe spaces for open discussions about Black history, especially when laws try to control what's taught. Today, they nurture critical thinkers and protect Black history despite ongoing challenges.

Black education in the US has always faced significant obstacles. From consistent repression to unequal funding, the story of Black education is a fight for fairness and respect. Yet, HBCUs have persevered, shaping generations of successful Black leaders and students.

"Moor's class gave me a foundation and purpose," Deleveaux, a student at Miami Northwestern High, shared. While her high school covered basic Black history, Moor's class dug deeper. "Dr. Moor explains your culture and heritage, helping you understand who you are and where you come from."

That is part of the educator's mission. Moor, a Howard grad, was shaped by the department founded by Black history pioneer Carter G. Woodson.

While Professor Moor's time at FMU ends this year, his influence on students like Dana Domingue is undeniable. "If you don't learn your Blackness in this class, I don't know where you would learn it.," stated the student.



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