

# HBCU Matters

M A G A Z I N E

\$8 | SUMMER 2021



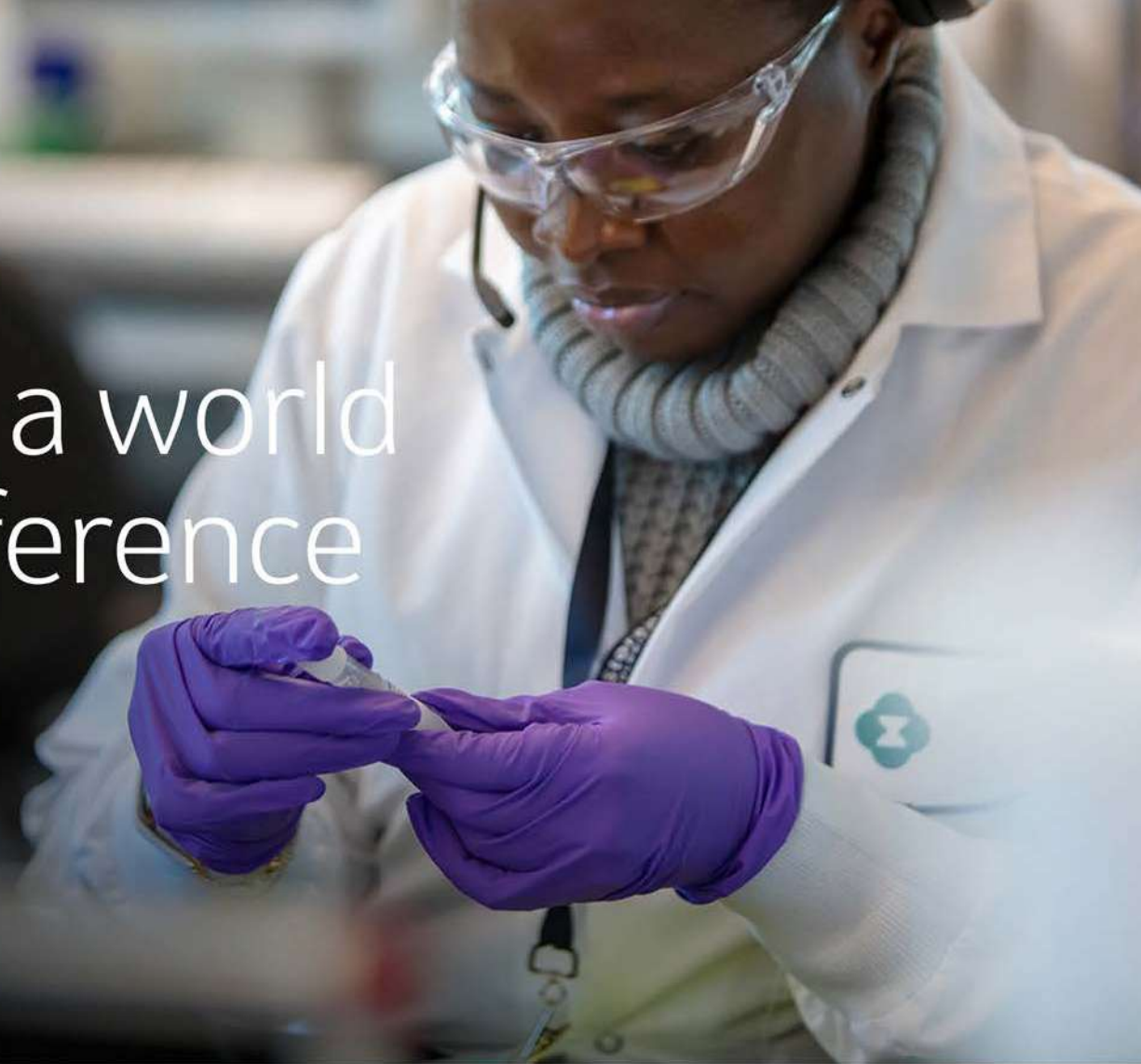
## LOTTIE HOLLAND GAME-CHANGERS IN CORPORATE DIVERSITY



## BLACK COLLEGES' INVESTMENT IN STEM SEES SHARP GROWTH



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Minority Business and Community Affairs Manager  
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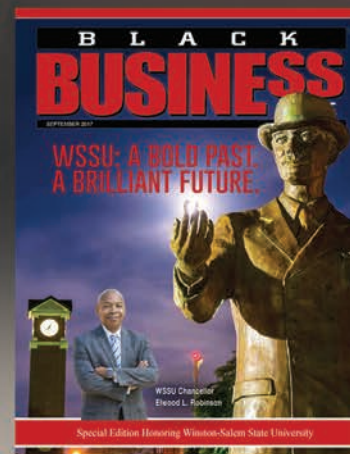
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## CORPORATE DIVERSITY



## BLACKS IN STEM



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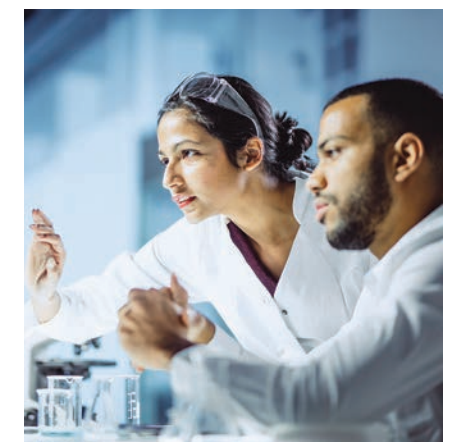
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## DIVERSITY FINALLY ON THE AGENDA

Recently, I attended an executive networking conference in Pinehurst, North Carolina, where diversity, equity and inclusion occupied much of the discussion over the three days. Everyone from C-suite executives to rank-and-file employees agreed that diversity, equity and inclusion should be a vital component of their corporation's culture.

Over the past several months, dating back to last summer, the topic of diversity, equity and inclusion finally made its way onto the agenda in corporate boardrooms across America.

Corporate America's fresh emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion follows a push for social change in the aftermath of the deaths last year of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. The renewed focus manifested in the appointments of chief diversity officers—one of the more tangible options for companies to show their support for social justice.

From June 2020 through the end of December, 51 chief diversity officers were appointed. This, compared with a total of 64 being appointed the previous 18 months, spanning January 2019 and the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. Those 115 appointments represent an all-time high in chief diversity officer hiring.

Although the position of chief diversity officer has been around for nearly two decades, the recent emphasis on the position comes along with increased responsibility and, in many cases, an increase in budgets for diversity programs and a more patient approach for the programs to show success.

Diversity, equity and inclusion is a key part of this second edition of HBCU Matters magazine. We did not want this moment to pass without highlighting several persons of color who are intentional about their work in diversity, equity and inclusion and how their work is changing the culture of their workplace environment.

These diversity executives come from various regions of the country and represent a variety of organizations and industries. Their work in the space of diversity, equity and inclusion is real and intentional.

We hope you'll enjoy reading about their challenges, their initiatives, and their passion. Their goal of making the workplace environment an inclusive and welcoming culture to all people whether they are Black, Latinx, Asian, LGBTQ, veterans, or persons with disabilities is not only admirable but necessary.

We intend to make diversity, equity and inclusion an important component of every edition. We'll applaud corporations that are intentional about diversity, equity and inclusion, and will hold those accountable wherein eradicating systemic racism has become a scripted sound bite for their PR persons.

In other words, some companies are intentional about a cultural shift bending toward inclusiveness, while others are paying it lip service.

*Richard L. Williams*  
N.C. A&T State University Alumnus



# HBCU Matters

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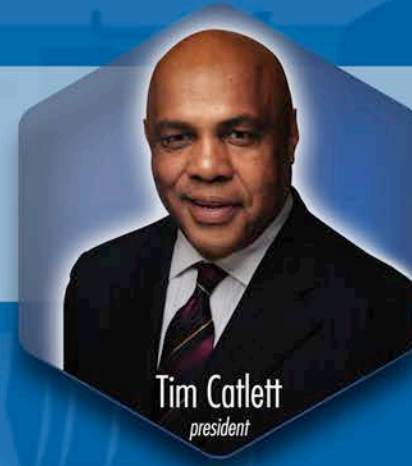
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# Progressive

Business Solutions

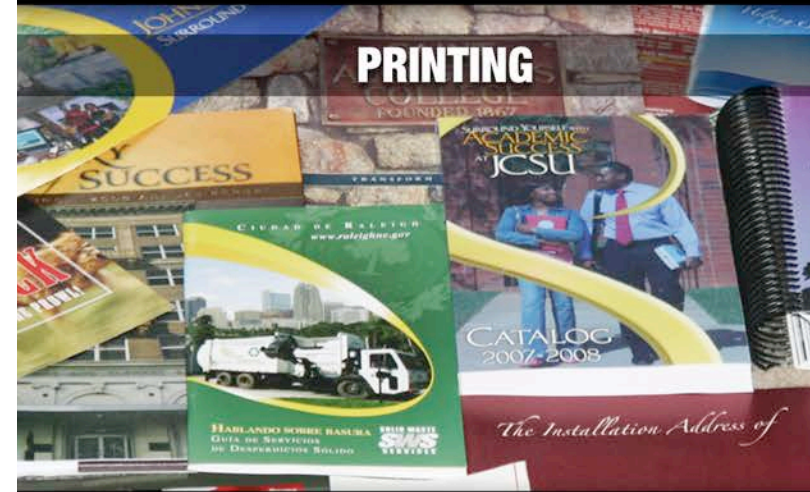
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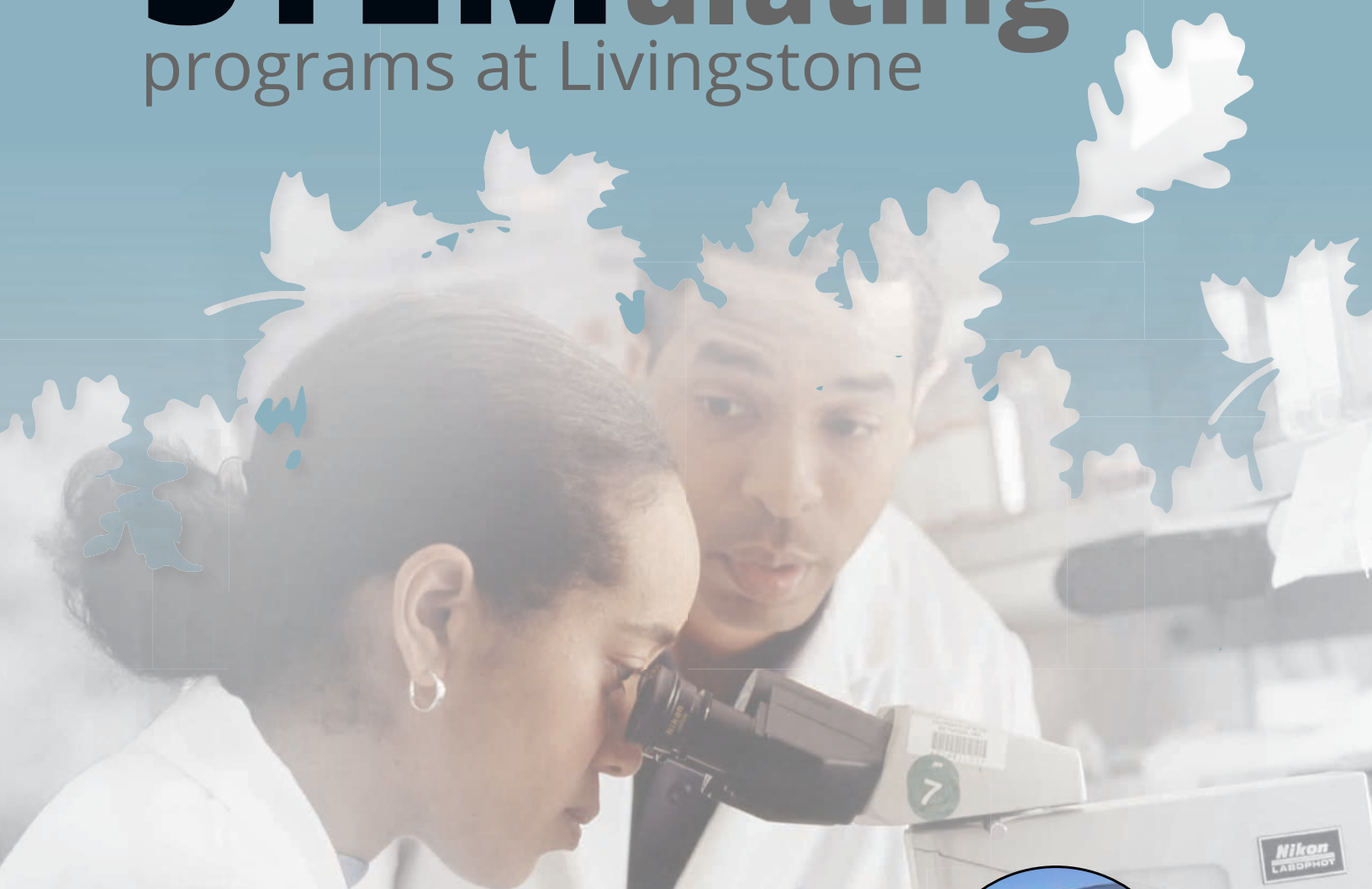
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# A New Era for Diversity & Inclusion

with

## Lottie Holland

Director – Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement,  
Stellantis – North America

**Born and raised in Detroit. Lottie is an alumna of Michigan State University and Wayne State University, where she earned an MBA. She is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Tau Alpha Omega Chapter. She is married with a one-year-old son.**



The corporate landscape for diversity and inclusion has changed dramatically in the past 18 months. While corporations have focused on revising and strengthening their diversity plans, the expectations in the community have grown less tolerant of aspirational statements about diversity and more demanding for tangible evidence of corporate intentions and values.

The new reality is that companies have to get past the words in their public statements and create tangible, measurable value for diverse people and communities. It comes down to their willingness to share their success.

Stellantis has a long-standing, enterprise-wide commitment to diversity and inclusion and strives to maintain a diverse work culture where all people are respected and fully engaged meeting and exceeding the demands of our customers.

In fact, we were proud this year that our team earned inclusion on Diversity Inc. magazine’s prestigious list of Top 50 Companies for Diversity.

And we applied the values of Matchmaker to optimize the economic impact of our new plant in Detroit, where we build the all-new 2021 Jeep Grand Cherokee L. The facility is the first new assembly plant built in the city of Detroit in nearly 30 years and represents a \$1.6 billion investment. To support production, 3,850 new jobs were created of which 2,100 have been filled by Detroit residents, fulfilling our commitment to prioritize Detroiters in the application process.

And there are more examples of our commitment to bring tangible value to diverse people and communities.

To commemorate Juneteenth 2021, Stellantis and the National Business League announced forming a national partnership to develop Black suppliers for future contracting and procurement opportunities in the pursuit of greater racial equity in the marketplace.

The Stellantis-NBL National Black Supplier Development Program will support the development of more than 2.9 million Black businesses around the country and internationally for future opportunities.

We are also proud of our longstanding relationships with HBCUs like Howard University and North Carolina A&T State University. These relationships span several decades and have led to 44 alumni of those outstanding schools joining the Stellantis family.

This year, we’ve also partnered with the Black Automotive Media Group to host a three-month virtual automotive internship with students from North Carolina Central University. The goal of the program is to enhance the perspectives of talented young people about future careers in the automotive industry.

But despite these successes, we still took a hard look at our diversity programs and have implemented ideas to strengthen our strategy, such as increasing support for our 11 Business Resource Groups, launching a robust Courageous Conversations program throughout our company to support open dialogues about difficult racial and cultural issues, and more.

We also are focusing on the role our leaders play in creating a work culture of respect and awareness and have bolstered our training programs.

For instance:

We’ve re-launched a video training series to bring awareness to unconscious bias and cultural blind spots, developed a mandatory diversity training for all of our employees beginning in 2021, and a separate mandatory training program specifically for leadership.

We’ve also established a Diversity & Inclusion objective for all employees, which will be weighted during our annual performance evaluation process. In the end, the success for companies like Stellantis depends on our ability to recruit and engage diverse talent, develop and unleash innovation and satisfy customers from all communities and cultures.

So, our commitment to D&I is at the very center of our formula for success. Our diversity is in every way a business asset and unique driver of value for our company, customers and communities.

As a company, Stellantis will continue to find innovative ways to get past the words and corporate pronouncements and use our business equity to empower communities that make our business and the world around us stronger and more sustainable.



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Mike Manley,  
CEO of Stellantis-Americas





Celeste Warren

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: 'ABILITY TO TRANSFORM OUR CULTURE'

Celeste Warren has always been intentional about her global work in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion.

As Merck's chief diversity officer and leader of the company's Global Diversity and Inclusion Center of Excellence, Warren is responsible for working with the pharmaceutical's global leaders to advance and embed diversity and inclusion throughout the organization to enhance the employee experience and maximize business performance.

Warren acknowledges that her efforts inside of the Fortune 100, New Jersey-based pharmaceutical does not stop at U.S. borders. Diversity issues, she said, are different in any of the other 80 worldwide markets the organization serves than they are in the U.S.

"We have to make sure that when we address organizational diversity and inclusion issues that they are enterprise-wide, but locally relevant, in each of the various worldwide markets," she said.

Another challenge she faces is ensuring that each internal division is representative of the organization's patient and client base. That means integrating diversity and inclusion in various business models, including sales and marketing, research and development, as well as clinical trials.

She did not just lean into diversity and inclusion, she said, in 2020 when worldwide demonstrations, activism and unrest swelled over racial injustice and police brutality. Merck has a decades-long record of diversity, equity

and inclusion.

"Over the past five years, we have strengthened our commitment to making diversity and inclusion a central strategy to business growth," Warren said. "Through these efforts, a clear purpose has emerged: to compel a more globally diverse and more inclusive workforce for our employees by creating an environment of belonging, engagement, equity and empowerment so that together, we can help ensure better health outcomes for patients."

Those diversity and inclusion efforts coincide with changes in workforce demographics at Merck as millennials and Gen Z workers are beginning to transition into middle management, and even into senior management, positions.

"About 40 percent of our employee workforce has less than five years' experience and that demographic has had a profound impact on Merck's corporate culture," Warren said. "These voices that belong to new entrants into the workforce are having a tremendous impact in our organization. In many instances, they're also speaking up for many employees who have been with the organization and who've gotten settled in their roles and who may think that they did not have a voice.

"Their collective voices inside and outside of Merck has had a societal impact, a corporate impact, and it also impacted Merck's statement of solidarity following the tragic death of George Floyd last summer," Warren added.

Warren is also proud of Merck's work with the National Urban League and the company's partnership with historically Black colleges and universities.

"We need to be invested in the school and we wanted to leverage our relationship with the National Urban League in order to create partnerships with HBCUs," she says. "I'm talking about summer programs, internships, recruitment of Black scientists, Blacks in technology, engineers, those in manufacturing – STEM-related fields.

"We didn't become interested all of sudden in the summer of 2020, because of the death of George Floyd, in trying to walking through (HBCU) doors that we had never tried to walk through before, and offer them a check, or say we'd like to hire your best and your brightest in the STEM fields," she said.

"We're not interested in one-night stands – we're looking for long-term relationships," Warren added. "We want to come in and work with the students, the administrators, and establish relationships with faculties and interact with the students through webinars, seminars, establishing relations. We're interested in how to get them engaged in our organization and looking for opportunities to bridge the gap between the classroom and the boardroom.

"Even to the point of letting their parents know that we're interested in them joining our organization, and that we're committed to them professionally and personally," she said.

Prior to joining Merck in 1997, Warren worked in human resources at Kraft Foods and General Foods. Since joining Merck, she has held numerous positions of increasing responsibility in human resources.

Warren has written extensively about diversity and inclusion issues. Her articles have been featured in numerous national and global publications and she has had the opportunity to speak at various events across the world.

Warren has been honored with many awards, including Black Enterprise's "Top Executives in Global Diversity and Inclusion", Savoy Magazine's "Most Influential Women in Corporate America", Women's eNews' "21 Leaders for the 21st Century", Diversity Global Magazine's "Influential Women in Global Diversity", and Diversity Woman Magazine's: "Elite100" List.

She serves on the boards of RWJBarnabas Health Systems and "All In Together" and on Merck's Political Action Committee. She is on the advisory council of OneTen. She is also a member of CNBC's Workforce Executive Council and World 50's Inclusion and Diversity Impact Community.

"Diversity and inclusion have the ability to transform our culture, drive business results and advance our company's mission to save and improve lives around the world," Warren said. "When people feel valued and empowered, they are able to innovate and make amazing things happen."



Annette Taylor

## TAYLOR WORKS TO ADVANCE INCLUSION WITH THE N.C. EDUCATION LOTTERY

Annette Taylor is the manager of Minority Business Outreach and Community Affairs of the N.C. Education Lottery.

The state's lottery is moving the needle on diversity, and Taylor is leading the way. She heads the N.C. Education Lottery's minority business participation program where she conducts statewide outreach among diverse suppliers and contractors. Additionally, her role includes engaging with diverse stakeholders, as well as developing strategic approaches to inclusive practices within the lottery.

"In my role, I have the pleasure of connecting with our state's business, education and civic leaders to align our mutual goals of benefitting education and the economy," Taylor said of the nearly \$3 billion industry.

The lottery's spending with historically underutilized, or diverse, business contractors surpasses the state's goal of 10 percent with prime contractors at slightly more than 15 percent. In addition, the lottery expects qualified contractors to pursue certification with the state's HUB program and to intentionally subcontract with diverse suppliers.

In 2019, Taylor established the Diversity Action Committee – an internal network of employees who provide input on stakeholder engagement, as well as on matters of diversity, equity and inclusion. The committee has supported the development

of several initiatives including its HBCU internship program, a disability mentoring program, and its "Beyond the Numbers: The Business of Diversity" project.

This year, Taylor hosted a national roundtable discussion during the National Association of State Provincial Lotteries 2021 virtual professional conference. The session focused on best practices in diversity in the lottery profession and featured DEI practitioners representing lotteries across the country. Her vision is for the N.C. Education Lottery to be "a model for diversity in the lottery industry worldwide."

Taylor joined the N.C. Education Lottery in 2018. Her background includes stints in public service, philanthropy, and economic development. She served nearly six years as a congressional staffer to U.S. Congressman G. K. Butterfield. Prior to, she led the N.C. Center for Women in Public Service where she helped prepare women for elected office and positions on boards and commissions.

Taylor is a civic leader committed to advancing equity. Her public service extends to several appointed boards, including the North Carolina Council for Women and Youth Involvement and the Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental and Health Equity Task Force. She earned a bachelor's degree from North Carolina Central University and a master's degree from Pfeiffer University.

## AMPLIFYING FOCUS IN DIVERSITY

Earlier this year, Truliant Federal Credit Union named Veronica Calderon to the newly created role of senior vice president, diversity, inclusion and equity. The role was created to formalize diversity, inclusion and equity principles and practices into Truliant's workplace culture, member service and philanthropy.

"As we amplify our focus in this critically important area, Veronica brings a wealth of experience fostering more diverse and inclusive environments," said Sherri Thomas, Truliant's chief administrative officer. "She will ensure these values are infused into our everyday business practices. Her hiring underscores the need to build accountability and transparency into our commitment to evolve these policies in tangible ways."

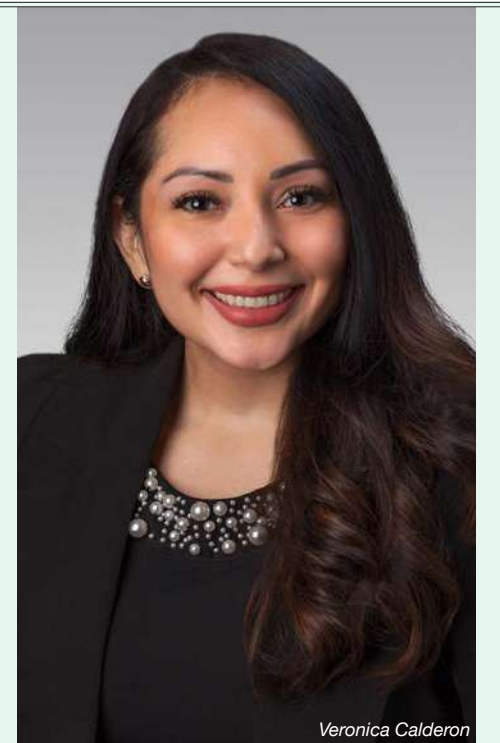
Calderon has more than a decade creating accountability in organizations around diversity, inclusion and equity. She served as chief diversity and inclusion officer at Aldersgate Life Planned Organizations, and has held other distinct roles building and implementing organizational diversity, inclusion

and equity initiatives. She brings experience from both of the largest employers in Charlotte, N.C. – Atrium Health Systems and Wells Fargo – where she worked to minimize health-care and financial disparities in marginalized communities.

Calderon serves as vice chair of the Latin American Chamber of Commerce and is a board member of the Freedom Center for Social Justice. She is a prior University of North Carolina at Charlotte Empowering Latina Woman of the Year and La Noticia Excelente Awards: Business Woman of the Year winner.

She holds Cornell University's HR Diversity & Inclusion Certificate, a Charlotte Chamber Emerging Business Leaders Certificate, a certificate from the Community Building Initiative on Leadership Development Initiative focused on DI&E, and a SHRM Human Resources and Diversity and Inclusion Certificate.

Calderon has a Bachelor of Administration in business management UNC Charlotte and an MBA from the Belk College of Business and the University of Phoenix.



Veronica Calderon

## ADDING DIVERSITY TO LAW FIRM CULTURE

In spring 2020, as the world grappled with a novel and quickly spreading coronavirus, Kimberly Bullock Gatling was presented with an opportunity.

The leaders of Gatling's law firm, Fox Rothschild, asked her to become the firm's first Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer.

From her office in Greensboro, North Carolina, a community she discovered and fell in love with while attending North Carolina A&T State University, Gatling had built a thriving intellectual property law practice. She had clients counting on her to protect their innovative ideas and technology. Was taking on the DEI responsibilities at a 950-attorney national law firm the right move?

After careful thought, Gatling decided she could do both and decided to accept the position. It was a once-in-lifetime chance to make a difference on an issue about which she was passionate within the profession she loved. Several days later, George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police, launching a nationwide reckoning on the issues of race.

Against this backdrop of social upheaval,

Gatling acted decisively to elevate and transform Fox Rothschild's diversity efforts, first by leading the firm to issue a strong and unequivocal statement against racial discrimination that declared, in no uncertain terms, that Black lives matter.

Law firms had historically avoided public discourse around institutional racism, and it was time for Fox Rothschild to take the lead. To back up the words, Gatling led the firm to increase its financial support of groups such as The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights in Law and the Innocence Project that advocate for civil rights and criminal justice reform. She worked with colleagues at Fox to launch a national pro bono initiative to support communities of color by working with local nonprofit organizations to provide assistance with housing and criminal justice matters, as well as support to Black business owners. And she led the firm to officially recognize Juneteenth.

Tone set, Gatling began the hard work of integrating diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the firm's culture. She started by developing and gaining firm leadership's

support for an ambitious firmwide diversity, equity and inclusion strategy, beginning with an assessment of workplace culture and experience from an inclusion perspective.

She launched a firmwide unconscious bias and diversity, equity and inclusion training initiative with a nationally known consultant, starting with top-level leadership and moving on to managers. She expanded the firm's Diversity Fellowship Program for law students, and is in the process of creating a sponsorship program that pairs young, diverse attorneys with prominent firm rainmakers to create opportunities for learning and advancement.

Good intentions and great ideas are important, but Gatling has been focused on results. As her first year in the position came to a close, she led the firm in joining Diversity Lab's Mansfield Rule 5.0, which commits Fox to a benchmark of ensuring at least 30 percent of those considered for leadership positions, equity partner promotions, senior lateral hires and formal client pitch opportunities are female lawyers, lawyers of color, LGBTQ+ lawyers and lawyers with disabilities. She also enrolled Fox in the Inclusion Blueprint, which lays the foundation to track, measure and benchmark the results of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in key areas.

In just a year leading Fox Rothschild's DEI efforts, Gatling has accomplished much, but she knows better than anyone that there is more work to be done. She urges those who champion the cause of diversity not to get discouraged or shy away from difficult discussions.

"I would offer other leaders the same advice I give myself, which is that baby steps are better than no steps, and that we have to meet people where they are," she said. "Holding authentic conversations around DEI and effecting systematic organizational changes to promote DEI can both be difficult. We have to understand the culture of the organization we're working within to balance reaching for stretch goals with understanding the appropriate pace for the work."

Gatling's Greensboro neighbors, who know her for her tireless service to groups such as the United Way, Cone Health Foundation and North Carolina A&T, will tell you that she will not shy from the challenge.

Gatling knows that change does not always happen quickly, but she is committed to making Fox Rothschild a diversity and inclusion leader, and a place where opportunity abounds for all, particularly those who have historically found their avenues to success blocked and their roads to advancement steep.



Kimberly Bullock Gatling

## DEI: SAFE SPACE FOR UNIQUE VOICES

By Revella Nesbit

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is about representation of different identities, ensuring that all people are treated with equity and creating a safe space for unique voices and perspectives. DEI is not only transforming the workforce, but how we approach mental, physical health and our interpersonal interactions.

I got involved in DEI through my graduate assistantship in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Winthrop University. This is where I received a bachelor's degree in social work and a master's degree in counseling. This foundational experience intersected in a deliberate and intentional way throughout my career.

As a licensed clinical mental health counselor supervisor, I've worked in behavioral health for 28 years. Within the last 22 years, I have continued my career in mental health counseling by leading the cultural competency, equity, diversity and inclusion efforts at Cardinal Innovations Healthcare.

DEI is interconnected throughout our organization. From my experiences as a counselor, individual healthcare needs can appear differently across cultures. Approaching this work requires a diversity, equity and inclusion lens to better understand those needs and how to support each person.

At Cardinal Innovations, we approached DEI in multiple ways.



Revella Nesbit

First, we assess our workforce and ensure the employee lifecycle represents the diversity of our communities and that there is equity in our policies and procedures. We provide cross-cultural training and education to our employees and to contracted providers. We support diverse communities through partnerships and sponsorships. Lastly, we focus on our member population by assessing their needs and eliminating barriers to care.

We consider how we can offer quality care while meeting people where they are. This includes understanding their health care beliefs and needs.

At Cardinal Innovations, we increased the diversity of our leadership by 50 percent in a year. In the pilot year of our internship program, we hired interns from all backgrounds, which included 67 percent people of color and 58 percent female.

A component of our approach is ensuring we are touching diverse communities through our external relationships, partnerships, vendor and provider contracts. I have worked across teams to initiate on-going trainings like implicit bias, cross-cultural communication and effectively serving the LGBTQ+ community.

The approach we took for internal training was simple but engaging and created environments that were non-threatening and allowed for deeper conversation. Some of our approaches range from your standard virtual training, affinity groups, book clubs, and small group discussions.

Diversity, equity and inclusion is truly about creating psychologically safe spaces where people can show up as their authentic self, feel secure and included. Approaching DEI isn't one-size fits all, but a spectrum that requires a multifaceted approach that includes the entire system.

*Revella Nesbit is director of diversity and inclusion at North Carolina-based Cardinal Innovations Health.*

## DEI CAN BE A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Dr. Doug Hall is High Point University's assistant vice president for diversity and inclusion in which he is part of the president's leadership cabinet and coordinates campus-wide diversity efforts with various departments, including multicultural affairs, human resources and the employee diversity committee.

High Point University considers a strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as a core component of its mission and an essential ingredient to a holistic education in the liberal arts tradition. A liberal arts education develops critical thinkers, moving students from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset.

This approach to learning prepares students for reflective action in an interdependent and diverse world. HPU not only understands and respects the unique talents and perspectives of all individuals, but also embraces and utilizes their contributions.

HPU's breadth of inclusiveness creates a path by which all individuals can achieve their highest potential in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society. HPU welcomes and respects all students, faculty and staff of all races, ethnicities, religions, genders,

sexual orientations, sexual identities and gender expressions, abilities, classes, ages and political ideas.

HPU recognizes that diversity also includes a range of geographic locations, communication styles, family makeup, educational background, military service and other unique life experiences. To encourage diversity and inclusion, the university endorses dynamic curricula and research agendas – through the university's core education as well as all fields of study, programming and community engagement – that include a multiplicity of views and perspectives.

Diversity, equity and inclusion are not merely moral imperatives or societal goals; it can be a competitive advantage. HPU's continued success as a university rests in its collective ability to embrace a multitude of opinions, ideas and beliefs so that the university can effectively educate the next generation of leaders who are culturally responsive, knowledgeable and globally engaged.

HPU's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion cultivates students' desire for citizenship in complex global communities.



Dr. Doug Hall



Maalika Moore-Thomas



Shawn Green

## CONOCOPHILLIPS HEADS DIVERSITY EFFORTS IN OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA

With projections that half of its workforce will consist of minorities by 2040, the oil and gas industry has continued to recruit persons of color, women, veterans and groups that have been mainly underrepresented.

At ConocoPhillips, Shawn Green and Maalika Moore-Thomas each takes an optimistic approach to recruiting some of the best minority talent and minds. Green, the manager of global services and technology, and Moore-Thomas, the senior supplier diversity coordinator, also keep a steady eye on diversity and inclusion with ConocoPhillips' contractors and suppliers.

"My day-to-day is basically working with our diverse suppliers from various backgrounds – minorities, LGBTQ community, and veterans – to ensure that our supplier base is well-rounded and to make sure that we have those diverse suppliers that we contract within our oil and gas specific jobs, as well as our professional services jobs," Moore-Thomas said.

Green's role, he said, is "to set the supply chain approach and strategy for automation, data analytics, and merchant technology.

"I'm ultimately accountable for the development approach for those programs that are under my purview," he said.

Moore-Thomas added that ConocoPhillips and the industry continue to work toward a more inclusive environment that reflects different backgrounds, interests, and perspectives. Green concurred.

"One of our major initiatives is ensuring we have suppliers for the variety of categories and sourcing opportunities we have," Green said. "It's really about making sure that we have a line of sight to those opportunities and a pipeline to diverse suppliers."

Moore-Thomas said the important of diversity is more than talking points and hollow conversation.

"We believe each person is accountable for creating and sustaining an inclusive work environment," she said. "It's important to have diversity in backgrounds, but it's important to have diversity in thought and

perspective at each table where decision-making takes place."

Raised in a single-family home in Tampa, Florida, Moore-Thomas later attended Ohio State University and earned two degrees in psychology and criminology, respectively. While working as a buyer for a small company, she received a message from a ConocoPhillips manager that intrigued her enough to relocate to Houston.

"I became very interested in oil and gas through learning about how much this industry truly influences the way we work and live," she said. "I applied for the position and never looked back."

Green grew up in Houston with his grandparents, and his primary focus was acquiring an education. He attended a magnet high school where engineers from Exxon often mentored him and other students. Green attended Tulane University, where he majored in chemical engineering, and later received an MBA.

Both Green and Moore-Thomas have pitched the industry to students at historically Black colleges and universities, and they continue to encourage all minorities about oil and gas.

"I have worked in this industry for 24 years, but my first exposure was in high school," Green recalled. "Over the years, I think we've made steady strides in energizing folks to understand the industry more. I know we have more work to do in having that awareness and outreach (regarding diversity and inclusion)."

Moore-Thomas said "all hands are on deck" in creating a more diverse and inclusive industry.

"[We are] figuring out how we can better task force, or diversify, the space," she said.

Green concluded that the industry is keen on developing programs and strategies to increase diversity in the workforce.

"It's a great time to be in the industry," he said. "It's a great time to be at the forefront of change. There will be a lot of opportunities."

## COMPANY HAILED FOR STEPS TOWARD DEI

Earlier this year, Shelby Publishing unveiled the recipient of its inaugural Diversity, Equity and Inclusion awards. The program recognizes retailers, wholesalers, distributors, suppliers/vendors and solutions providers that are working to advance and uphold diversity, equity and inclusion in the U.S. grocery industry.

In both their workplaces and the community at large, these companies demonstrated a commitment to driving and imparting positive changes across their organizations by removing barriers and creating environments where individuals can thrive as their authentic selves.

Reflecting on the events of a turbulent 2020, many leaders have expressed that the time has come to stop talking about diversity, equity and inclusion and to take action. The honorees have been doing just that – and, in most cases, for years. They don't just embrace inclusion, they celebrate uniqueness and differences.

Take Albertsons Cos., for example. The Idaho-based grocery giant is working to ensure management personnel reflects the rich diversity of communities it serves.

Jonathan O. Mayes a senior vice president and chief diversity and inclusion officer.

"We also have two people who co-lead our supplier diversity efforts – one for goods for resale and other goods not for resale," Mayes said. "As part of our effort to build an inclusive culture, all associates have taken an anti-bias training course."

The company also launched "Leading With Inclusion" to help deepen the culture of diversity, inclusion and belonging.

"Over 4,000 associates have participated thus far in these sessions," he said. "Other policies involve diverse interview panels and candidate slates, and targets to help company management reflect the communities we serve. "It begins with having diverse candidate slates and interview panels, he added. "It also involves understanding that companies that leverage diversity generally outperform companies that don't."

He noted that many studies have shown that diverse teams tend to outperform teams that lack in diversity.



Jonathan O. Mayes

## Creating opportunities to thrive.

The vital perspectives and contributions of women, and all our diverse teammates, make us better. And every day, the pursuit of better drives us. That's why we're committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion—and boldly believe in the power of what we can achieve together.



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## CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER: HOTTEST AND TOUGHEST JOB

WHAT DOES A CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER DO?

WHY IS CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER IMPORTANT?

DO YOU NEED TO HIRE A DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION LEADER?

By Jess Man

A chief diversity officer is an experienced diversity leader to lead and be accountable to an organization on everything equity, diversity and inclusion. The chief diversity officer is a strategic leader, thought partner and implementer who will connect the dots between diversity and inclusion efforts across the organization.

Typically, early in their tenure, the chief diversity officer will develop a comprehensive organization-wide strategic diversity and inclusion plan; develop training programs for faculty, staff and students; review and assess the impact and effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programs; and serve as a leader in the organization.

An organization that hires a chief diversity officer can be government, a university,

for-profit corporation, charity, or nonprofit organization. The CDO will serve as a champion for equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and will work with leadership, management, staff and senior leadership to further a more vibrant, inclusive, and supportive environment for underrepresented and all members of the organization.

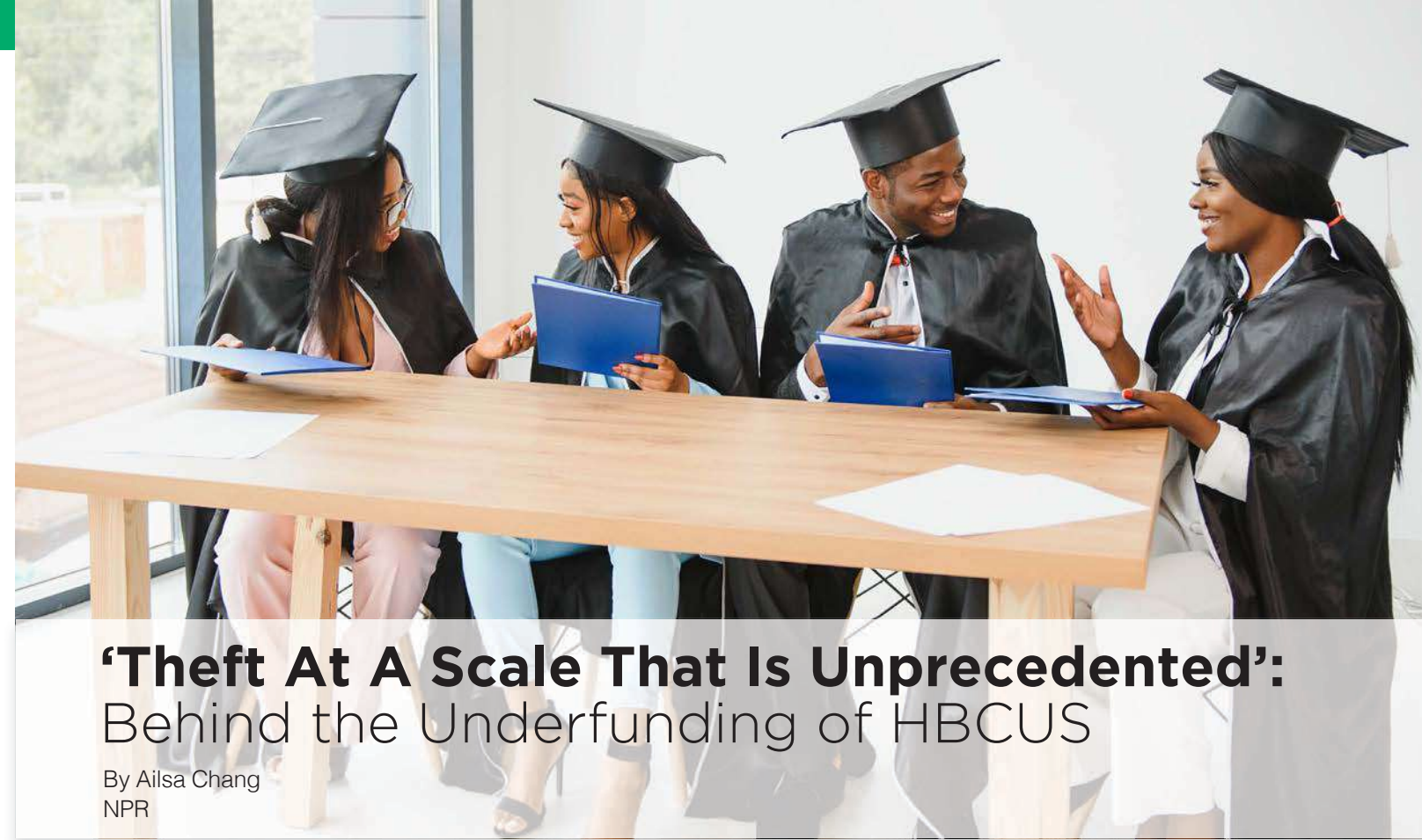
The chief diversity officer is a senior position and usually reports to the president, chief operation officer, or chief human resources officer depends on the organization structure. In universities, they usually report to the president or chancellor of the university.

According to HR thought leader Josh Bersin, the chief diversity officer will be the strategic partner to the CEO, rather than just an HR program. However, it is also going to be

the toughest job as well. There are at least nine dimensions to diversity (age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class, disability and nationality). Each dimension will require special treatments and specialties.

So, basically, it is a job that can get criticized a lot, but the scope is very broad, and it is hard to measure, and also everyone – including most senior leaders – thinks they know enough to be dangerous. Until now, most of the diversity and inclusion functions in small and large corporations were underfunded.

*Jessica Man is the editor-in-chief and senior diversity advisor at Diversity Social.*



## ‘Theft At A Scale That Is Unprecedented’: Behind the Underfunding of HBCUS

By Ailsa Chang  
NPR

Tennessee State University could be due for a half-billion-dollar payout, according to recent findings that show the HBCU has been historically underfunded. Tennessee could owe a historically Black university more than a half-billion dollars after it withheld funding for decades.

A bipartisan legislative committee determined last month that the state failed to adequately fund Tennessee State University in matched land grants going all the way back to the 1950s, costing the public university between \$150 million and \$544 million.

When the school was founded, the federal government designated it a land-grant institution, as it did with the University of Tennessee. Under the program, the state of Tennessee was required to match the federal money sent to the schools each year.

“In TSU’s case, the state did not match the funds dollar-for-dollar for decades,” stated a news release from the legislative committee.

Tennessee State isn’t the only historically Black college or university missing out on state funds. Maryland recently finalized a \$577 million settlement to resolve a lawsuit alleging the state had underfunded its four HBCUs.

Andre Perry, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who has written about Maryland’s battle with inequality in public higher education, blames institutional racism for what he believes is a pervasive lack of funding at HBCUs.

“We should assume that it’s race, because many of the other institutions – predominantly

white institutions – are receiving their full fund,” Perry said.

Calling the recent findings at TSU “theft at a scale that is unprecedented,” Perry said funding should be scrutinized across the U.S., at every HBCU.

“This is what fuels the economy: a highly educated workforce. So if we’re denying Black students, Black institutions (state funding), we’re throttling the economy,” he said.

Perry spoke to NPR’s *All Things Considered* about how *Brown v. Board of Education* played a role in HBCU funding, the way Black students are denied specialized program opportunities and the myth of reluctant alumni donors as a root cause for lack of school funding. Here are some interview highlights:

**On how segregation laws created funding disparities in higher education.** Since the ‘50s, since *Brown v. Board*, the federal government ordered states to desegregate their schools. Most people just think that occurred in the K-12 arena, but it also occurred for higher education institutions. By the way, most HBCUs are in Southern states. So, there has just been a reticence to desegregate higher-ed based on funding, and so many of these states created funding formulas that regularly just shortchanged HBCUs.

**On the academic consequences of underfunded HBCUs.** When any university doesn’t have adequate funds, they’re not able to produce the kind of high-cost programs that might be in demand. I’ll just give an example: engineering. To run an engineering school, it costs

a lot of money. So, if you’re coming up short, guess what? You’re not going to have an engineering program, or it’s going to be theoretical in nature and you won’t have the equipment, you won’t have the facilities to have people get the best out of that degree. In addition, you’re not able to innovate.

But what you’re seeing in HBCUs, it’s not just that they’re not able to innovate or add certain degree programs. Their facilities are deteriorating. They’re not able to keep up with the competition. So, this just leads to a lowering of standards, and eventually students won’t want to go.

**On the argument that a lack of alumni donations is responsible for the financial problems at HBCUs.** When people say this is a problem of people giving ... what they’re really saying is we’re going to blame Black people for the lack of funding in Black institutions, abdicating the state’s responsibility to do so. That’s all that it’s saying. We need to expose this lack of funding as really theft at a scale that is unprecedented.

So that’s why this is just horrible, these findings. And we should go deeper. We should do an investigation at every state, for every HBCU, and we should assume that they are being robbed.

*This story was produced, edited and adapted for NPR by Jason Fuller, Sarah Handel and Emma Bowman.*



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# LIVINGSTONE COLLEGE BUILDING STATE-OF-ART ESPORTS COMPLEX

A state-of-the-art esports complex is coming to Livingstone College this fall. Livingstone College has taken the progressive and bold steps to enter into the esports arena by establishing the Livingstone College Athletics Esports Facility. It will be located inside the School of Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts, 530 Jake Alexander Blvd. South.

The venue, projected to be completed in 2021, will comprise five components: competitive esports, simulation golf, iRacing, broadcasting, and an abundance of space for social gatherings. Upon completion, Livingstone esports anticipates an active schedule and has already established facility hosting plans for more than 100 events annually.

Livingstone esports will include 16 competitive gaming stations, 16 social play stations, a pre-game strategy and coaching room, two golf simulation stations, a broadcasting center, two iRacing simulation units positioned in the college's pit room, uniquely-designed esports hotel suites, and a concessions and beverage bar. The facility will include overnight hotel rentals, large gathering halls for community and professional association meetings, and

expanded athletic boarding for the college's existing athletic programming.

Livingstone has contracted with Ohio-based Meridian HD to develop the estimated \$1.3 million project that will include a more compact facility in the Walls Center at its West Monroe Street campus, designated for students only. The larger off-campus venue will be open to the public as well as students.

"The launch of our state-of-the-art esports program this fall is demonstrative of Livingstone's commitment to remain progressive and relevant with the programs we offer," said Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins Sr., Livingstone's president. "We are also excited for this inaugural partnership with Meridian HD as we deliver on a competitive and cutting edge esports program."

After almost a year of design planning, Livingstone's Athletics Director Lamonte Massie-Sampson said he is excited to know that Livingstone's esports program will be the model for many others to follow. He said the facility will allow the college to recruit the best esports competitors to attend Livingstone College.

"We have an exciting concept that no other

HBCU, or any other college for that matter, has conceptualized," Massie-Sampson said. "This combination of education, competition and revenue generation sets Livingstone College athletics years ahead in this new initiative."

"We have also dedicated scholarship money to ensure we are competing not only against other state-of-the-art facilities, but with scholarships as well," he added. "When this project is completed, Livingstone will be competing and leading in the esports industry."

There are also plans for a student-centered curriculum incorporating STEM – science, technology, engineering and math – education and preparing students for career opportunities that derive from esports. They include commercial and defense drone operators; computer programming; sports journalism and broadcasting; audio/visual entertainment professionals; content creators; and hospitality and event planning management.

*For more information about the esports program or esports scholarships, contact Massie-Sampson at [lmassie-sampson@livingstone.edu](mailto:lmassie-sampson@livingstone.edu).*



## UNCF WORKING TO INCREASE BLACK REPRESENTATION IN STEM CAREERS

The increasing amount of African Americans studying and working in science, technology, engineering and math fields is revolutionary. Largely due to the efforts of the country's historically Black colleges and universities, African Americans are entering their STEM degrees better equipped to thrive in college, to graduate, and to find successful careers.

Despite recent progress, the statistics concerning African Americans in STEM fields show a clear need for growth. Black and white students across the country intend to pursue STEM degrees at similar rates, but Black students in any STEM field struggle to achieve comparable representation in degree attainment.

The Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions reports that Black students studying engineering earned only 4.2 percent of bachelor's degrees in 2012 across the U.S., while white students earned 68.1 percent.

The nation's HBCUs help to address this need. Twenty-five percent of African American graduates with STEM degrees come from HBCUs. HBCUs graduated 46 percent of Black who earned degrees in STEM disciplines between 1995 and 2004. Eight HBCUs were among the top 20 institutions to award

the most science and engineering bachelor's degrees to Black graduates from 2008-2012. HBCUs are the institution of origin among almost 30 percent of Black graduates of science and engineering doctorate programs.

A large part of preparing first-generation, low-income African American students for success in STEM is providing the resources and guidance that they often lack long before enrollment in college.

According to a UNCF report, K-12 education should implement improved school-based practices to increase African American student achievement. Particularly, that youth should be exposed to various opportunities in STEM fields to spark greater interest in math and in college. Many African American high school students lack access to the educational resources needed to prepare them to earn STEM degrees.

The U.S. Department of Education reports that, among public high schools serving predominantly African American students, less than one-third of schools offer calculus and about 40 percent offer physics. African American students represent 16 percent of the country's high school students, yet only 9 percent of them take an advanced placement course.

It is for these reasons, among others, that many disadvantaged African American students are not prepared to pursue and succeed in a STEM degree in college.

Seeing the need to equip African American high school students with the skills and resources to successfully pursue careers in STEM, UNCF partnered with the Fund II Foundation and established a scholarship program to help African American students seeking careers in STEM fields. Over a period of five years, the Fund II Foundation UNCF STEM Scholars Program is identifying 500 African American high school students pursuing careers in STEM fields. These scholars will receive scholarships, internships, mentoring and other tools to help them reach their goals. Overall, the Fund II Foundation is contributing \$48 million for the STEM Scholars Program.

UNCF has also invested in several programs that help African American STEM students during their time at college. The UNCF/Merck Science Initiative, a multimillion dollar partnership between UNCF and Merck, supported in a variety of ways more than 500 African American undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral science students.



Photo courtesy Livingstone College

## BMS, HBCUS FORM ALLIANCE TO INCREASE BLACKS IN BIOPHARMA



Chris Boerner



Dr. Anthony K. Wutoh



Dr. Danielle Winchester



Dr. Larry Robinson

Despite representing roughly 12 percent of the U.S. adult population, in biopharma, Black professionals account for only 7 percent of the total workforce and 3 percent of executive teams.

In an initiative designed to increase access to and awareness of the biopharma industry among Black talent and build a diverse talent pipeline, Bristol Myers Squibb announced this summer its collaboration with Howard University, Florida A&M University, Morgan State University, North Carolina A&T State University and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff to launch Tomorrow's Innovators – a multi-million dollar strategic alliance to attract top HBCU-affiliated talent to the bio-pharma industry in the

next five years.

Tomorrow's Innovators extends the health equity and diversity and inclusion commitments announced by Bristol Myers Squibb in 2020, which includes the goal of increasing the diversity of the company's workforce. By the end of 2022, Bristol Myers Squibb aims to double executive representation of Black and Hispanic/Latino employees in the U.S. and achieve gender parity at the executive level globally.

Designed to reach diverse talent sooner in their undergraduate career, Tomorrow's Innovators will provide them the support and education needed to reach their career goals within the biopharma industry.

"At Bristol Myers Squibb, we

believe that bringing innovative medicines to patients requires a workforce with diverse experiences, perspectives and personal backgrounds that reflect the diverse patients and communities we serve around the world," said Chris Boerner, executive vice president and chief commercialization officer at Bristol Myers Squibb. "While there is still more to do in addressing racial and societal equity, programs like Tomorrow's Innovators provide a critical opportunity to reach diverse talent sooner and cultivate a richer talent pipeline within our industry. When diversity is celebrated and inclusion is intentional, everyone benefits, especially our patients."

Dr. Anthony K. Wutoh, provost and chief academic officer of

Howard, applauded the new initiative.

"We are delighted that Bristol Myers Squibb has taken this step toward creating a more diverse industry workforce by investing in HBCU students," Wutoh said. "Howard University has a long history of training students in STEM/science fields and we believe Tomorrow's Innovators will greatly expand opportunities for our students."

North Carolina A&T official had similar praise for the program.

"The Tomorrow's Innovators strategic alliance presents a meaningful opportunity to build the talent pipeline that will not only address the lack of representation in the biopharma industry, but also equip the industry to meet the challenges of the future," said Danielle Winchester, associate dean of the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics at A&T. "It offers another avenue ... to develop talented executive leaders who contribute to the global economy."

Said Dr. Larry Robinson, president of Florida A&M: "This alliance with Bristol Myers Squibb is a natural area of collaboration for FAMU, given our College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Institute of Public Health. FAMU and other HBCUs can be a tremendous source of talent for the bio-pharma industry when utilized in this manner. This alliance provides a framework for sustained progress."



Melonie Parker

Historically Black colleges and universities have stood as pillars of excellence for more than 180 years and continue to serve as havens for Black students in pursuit of higher education. Founded to provide Black Americans with a fundamental human right – the access to a full education – they have grown to produce some of the greatest leaders, thinkers and cultural influencers of our time.

HBCUs are actively shaping the next generation of Black leaders and are helping build a more diverse workforce across all industries, including tech. In fact, 25 percent of African American graduates with STEM degrees come

## GOOGLE'S \$50M TO 10 HBCUS WILL ADDRESS DIVERSITY GAP IN TECH

from HBCUs. Despite the success of HBCUs, Black professionals continue to be underrepresented across the tech industry.

Google is working to close that gap and increase the representation of people of color in tech fields, said Melonie Parker, Google's chief diversity officer.

"We want to do our part to support these institutions as we work to help close the gap, together," Parker said. "I'm proud to announce a \$50 million grant to 10 HBCUs that will help support scholarships, invest in technical infrastructure for in-class and remote learning, and develop curriculum and career support programs."

HBCU leaders enthusiastically embraced the partnership.

"With this effort, Google is setting a new standard in corporate philanthropy that directly addresses decades of gross inequities and underfunding at HBCUs and establishes a new path forward to ensuring workforce diversity in STEM, one of our most critical sectors here in the U.S. and within the global market, said

Dr. David K. Wilson, president of Morgan State University. "Google has done its homework and understands that our HBCUs are great institutions for unrestricted investment."

"This financial commitment is our largest to date for HBCUs," Parker said. "Each institution will receive a one-time unrestricted financial grant of \$5 million, providing institutions with the flexibility to invest in their communities and the future workforce as they see fit."

The grant, announced in June, follows Google's initiatives in the last several years to support HBCUs, including the tech giant's Pathways to Tech initiative.

"These initiatives are designed to build equity for HBCU computing education, help job seekers find tech roles, and provide opportunities to accelerate their careers," Parker said. "This grant further solidifies our commitment to providing access and opportunities for underrepresented groups in tech. We'll continue to partner closely with HBCUs to achieve this shared goal."

## PRAIRIE VIEW A&M LEADER TO SERVE ON SPACE GRANT CONSORTIUM BOARD

Dr. Magesh Rajan, the vice president for research and innovation at Prairie View A&M University, has been elected to the NASA-Texas Space Grant Consortium Board of Directors. TSGC, which is a part of the National Space Grant Program, is a group of 65 institutions that are joined to ensure that the benefits of space research and technology are available to all Texans.

"Prairie View A&M is a longtime affiliate and has participated in many TSGC programs and we welcome the input, and connections that Dr. Rajan will provide," said Dr. Tim J. Urban, director of TSGC and research associate for the Center for Space Research. "His experience with NASA programs and position as VP for research and innovation promises even greater collaboration between TSGC and minority-serving institutions."

The TSGC board is comprised of seven members with representation from The University of Texas and Texas A&M University systems. Each board member serves a three-year term. Rajan previously served as an elected representative from TAMU at Corpus Christi from 2011 to 2017.

"I am honored and humbled to be elected to the TSGC board and represent PVAMU and the division of research and innovation," said Rajan, who also has an MBA in Strategic Management and executive training at Harvard's Institute for Management and Leadership in Education. "This board position will further enhance the access and relationship with TSGC community and opportunities for outstanding faculty and student researchers of Prairie View A&M University, and other universities and K-12 schools across the state of Texas."



Dr. Magesh Rajan

# CVS GRANTS \$5M IN SCHOLARSHIP FOR MINORITY STUDENTS IN HEALTH CARE

The CVS Health Foundation has announced establishment of a five-year, \$5 million Health Care Careers Scholarship program, in collaboration with UNCF. Scholarships will be awarded to Black and Latinx students pursuing an academic career in health care. The new scholarship program is part of CVS Health's nearly \$600 million commitment over the next five years to address

inequity faced by Black people and other disenfranchised communities.

"This scholarship will feed a robust pipeline of under-represented students, which will in turn strengthen the pool of talented college graduates ready for today's and tomorrow's workplace," said David Casey, senior vice president and chief diversity officer, CVS Health. "Enabling

students to excel in the workforce – particularly people of color and those facing financial barriers – advances our commitment to social justice and equity and will have a lasting impact."

The Health Care Careers Scholarship is being launched in collaboration with UNCF, the nation's largest minority education organization supporting students' education

and development through scholarships and advocacy for minority education and college readiness.

According to a report by UNCF's Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute, students who receive a UNCF scholarship outperform the national population of students in persistence through college and to graduation. In fact, 70 percent of African American freshmen who received a UNCF general scholarship graduated within six years, compared to only 38 percent of all African American students nationwide.

"This is an incredibly generous gift from the CVS Health Foundation," said Dr. Michael L. Lomax, UNCF's president and CEO. "We know that African American, Latinx and other minority communities have been disproportionately impacted by the current pandemic. It's particularly important right now to welcome as many students of color as we can into the healthcare field. The ripple effect of COVID-19 has the potential to discourage students from pursuing a college education and may prevent others from continuing their education. Recognizing these facts, the CVS Health Foundation is providing a pathway for successful applicants to continue on their journey to attain a college degree and become our next generation of pandemic frontliners."

Black and Latinx students attending an accredited four-year college or university in the United States with an interest in pursuing a career in the health care sector are eligible to apply for the need-based awards. Eligible areas of study will bolster the healthcare innovation talent pipeline, with majors including pharmacy, nursing, business management, biology, biochemistry, finance, operations/supply chain, data analytics, information technology, actuary and human resources. The two-year scholarships will support students in their junior and senior years as they complete their studies.

"Working with UNCF, the CVS Health Foundation is supporting a best-in-class model for moving students to and through college," said Eileen Howard Boone, senior vice president, corporate social responsibility and philanthropy, CVS Health and President of the CVS Health Foundation. "UNCF has an impressive track record of impacting minority education and improving graduation rates for students, while making a meaningful difference in the lives of selected scholars."



David Casey



Dr. Michael L. Lomax



Eileen Howard Boone



# Michael Jordan Gives \$1M to Journalism, Sports-Related Studies at Morehouse

Associated Press



Michael Jordan



Spike Lee



ATLANTA – Michael Jordan and Nike's Jordan Brand are giving \$1 million to Morehouse College to boost journalism and sports-related studies. The gift will help enrich its journalism and sports program that was originally launched with a donation from director and actor Spike Lee. The school, in a news release, said the donation will help fund scholarships, technology and educational programming for students in those fields.

"Morehouse is grateful to Michael Jordan and Jordan Brand for an investment in the education of talented men of color who will ensure there is equity, balance, and truth in the way sports stories are framed and the way the Black experience is contextualized within American history," said Monique Dozier, vice president for institutional advancement at Morehouse.

The donation is part of a larger philanthropic donation by Jordan and Jordan Brand called the Black Community Commitment, which has directed donations to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Ida B. Wells Society, among other organizations.

"Education is crucial for understanding the Black experience today," Jordan said. "We want to help people understand the truth of our past and help tell the stories that will shape our future."

The program, which has focused on the lack of Black leadership in sports journalism and athletics, has produced more than 80 graduates who now work in media and sports. Lee, a 1979 Morehouse graduate, said there would be a "rich legacy of storytellers who will be supported by these programs."

"Many people are influenced to think a certain way about Black folks based on what they see on television and in Hollywood. We've got to tell our story," he said.



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# Phylicia Rashad Begins Tenure as Dean of Howard's College of Fine Arts

By Walter Hudson



Phylicia Rashad

Howard University has hired a well-known actress and stage director to serve as the dean of the school's recently re-established College of Fine Arts.

Phylicia Rashad, who played Claire Huxtable on "The Cosby Show," assumed her post on July 1, 2021. Rashad, 72, graduated magna cum laude from Howard in 1970 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. She will be expected to catapult the school's theater and directing programs, which have a reputation of producing actors like the late Chadwick Boseman, to greater heights.

"I can think of no one individual better suited to take on this role than Ms. Phylicia Rashad," said Howard's president, Dr. Wayne A. I. Frederick. "Given Ms. Rashad's reputation as well as her capabilities and impressive lists of accomplishments, she will undoubtedly empower the college to transcend even our incredibly high expectations.

"Under her leadership, Howard will continue to inspire and cultivate the artists, and leaders who will shape our niche and national cultures for generations to come," Frederick added.

While it's rare to see actors take on administrative roles at colleges and universities, it is not unprecedented. Actor Clifton Davis, who starred in such television shows as "Amen" and "That's My Mama," served as vice chancellor for development at Elizabeth City State University in the early 2000s.

Experts predict that Rashad's visibility on campus will undoubtedly help the university maintain its connection with the acting community, while also helping to secure deep philanthropic gifts from wealthy donors.

"It is an honor to welcome one of Howard's acclaimed daughters back home to her alma mater," said Dr. Anthony K. Wutoh, the university's provost. "In this full-circle moment, Ms. Phylicia Rashad will take the training and skills that she honed as a student at Howard and exuded in an outstanding performing career, and she will share those pearls of wisdom with the next generation of students in the College of Fine Arts. Her passion for the arts and student success makes her a perfect fit for this role."

In a versatile career that has spanned more than four decades, Rashad has been recognized with a Tony Award, an NAACP Image Award and induction into the Theater Hall of Fame. She is the recipient of numerous honorary doctorates from mostly historically Black colleges and universities including Howard, Spelman College, Tuskegee University, St. Augustine's University, Clark Atlanta University and Morris Brown College.

But it was her role as Claire Huxtable, the tough and loving mother and lawyer on "The Cosby Show", that introduced Rashad to millions of viewers in the 1980s. Thanks to reruns of the show across the years, a new generation of students have become familiar with the sitcom.

Academia is not entirely new to Rashad. She has served a guest lecturer and adjunct faculty member at a number of colleges and universities, including Howard, New York University and Julliard, and was the first recipient of the Denzel Washington Chair in Theater at Fordham University in Bronx, New York.

"It is a privilege to serve in this capacity and to work with the Howard University administration, faculty and students in re-establishing the College of Fine Arts," Rashad said.

Dr. Dana A. Williams, a professor of African American Literature and dean of The Graduate School at Howard, praised the appointment.

"We're excited to have Ms. Rashad join the Howard decadal leadership team. She's as familiar as anyone with the high academic standards necessary to train the next generation of artists across disciplines," Williams said. "Her leadership will no doubt have a positive impact on recruitment of exemplary faculty and students."

Williams said Rashad understands that visual and performing artists "also need scholars and critics to talk about their work with adequate cultural nuance and depth, so you should also expect growth on that front as well."

"Howard's reputation in the arts is historically and contemporarily strong on all fronts," Williams added. "Her appointment fortifies this."

Walter Hudson is a writer with *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education*.

# Howard's College of Fine Arts Named After Chadwick Boseman



Chadwick Boseman

Howard University has announced an amazing tribute to one of its most notable alumni – the late, beloved actor Chadwick Boseman. Howard University announced earlier this year that it will name its newly established College of Fine Arts after Boseman, a 2000 graduate of the university. Boseman died in August 2020 at the age of 43 after suffering from colon cancer.

"We are very excited. This is the right thing to do," Howard President Wayne A. I. Frederick, said in a statement. "Chadwick's love for Howard University was sincere, and although he did not live to see those plans through to fruition, it is my honor to ensure his legacy lives on."

Frederick also confirmed that Boseman had served on the college's board prior to his death and had planned to implement a Master's Class series for students on the Washington, D.C., campus.

The renaming unites Howard and Walt Disney Co.'s executive chairman Bob Iger, who will spearhead fundraising for an endowment named after Boseman, as well as help raise money for the construction of a state-of-the-art building on HU's campus.

The new building will house the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Arts, the Cathy Hughes School of Communications, the school's TV station, WHUT, and radio station, WHUR 96.3 FM.

The news came a few weeks after it was announced that Phylicia Rashad would be the new dean of Howard's newly established fine arts college. The connection is emotionally significant as Rashad served as a mentor to Boseman when he was an acting student at Howard.

Rashad, along with Denzel Washington, notably raised funds for Boseman and other students to attend the Oxford Summer Program of the British American Drama Academy at Balliol College in Oxford, England.

# Spelman College Names Arts Center After Alumna LaTanya Richardson Jackson and Samuel L. Jackson



LaTanya Richardson Jackson and Samuel L. Jackson

Spelman College will name a renovated theater, lobby, dressing rooms and supporting areas the LaTanya Richardson Jackson and Samuel L. Jackson Performing Arts Center. Richardson Jackson spent time in programs on Spelman's campus as a high school student before becoming an undergraduate.

Richardson Jackson and Jackson both performed leading roles

with the Morehouse Spelman Players at Spelman in the 1970s. Their auspicious debut in plays produced by Spelman's Department of Drama catapulted the couple into award-winning careers spanning nearly 50 years.

"The benevolence of God placed me, Sam and our daughter Zoe inside a miracle which out of great gratitude, we work hard to share. Sam and I are invested in the success of Spelman because Spelman first invested so much in us," said Richardson Jackson, who served on the Spelman College Board of Trustees from 1998 to 2006.

Located in the John D. Rockefeller Fine Arts Building, the updated arts center is being made possible by a lead gift from the Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation along with generous donations from Richardson Jackson and Jackson, Bank of America and David Rockefeller Jr.

"Our beloved Mellody Hobson and George Lucas have always been friends who supported Spelman," Richardson Jackson said. "Their legendary philanthropy has forever graciously seeded many of the causes that Sam and I champion. But for them to offer of themselves in this incredibly generous way (without their knowledge) speaks to an understanding of the importance of Spelman women to the world, while lovingly giving zoom focus to the reality of our miracle.

"Bank of America and their CEO Brian Moynihan are new friends who have joined us in this preservation process, and we are ever grateful for their support," she added.

# HBCU CELEBRITIES



Gospel singer Yolanda Adams graduated from **Texas Southern University** with a bachelor's in journalism in 1984 and began a career as a schoolteacher, which she left to pursue singing full time.

Anthony Anderson, who stars in and executive produces the hit ABC series *Black-ish*, says he is on schedule to graduate from **Howard University** alongside his son, Nathan Anderson, in 2022. Anderson was made an honorary member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in 2020.

Alani Nicole "La La" Anthony is an American television personality, author, businesswoman, producer and actress, who attended **Howard University**, where she studied communications.

Singer-songwriter, actress and record producer Erykah Badu studied theater at **Grambling State University** before leaving the university in 1993 to focus on music.

As we celebrate historically Black colleges and universities, there are many celebrities who have proudly represented their alma mater in Hollywood — on-camera and behind the scenes — as well as on television and in music. Here are a few of them.



Jerry Rice, considered the best wide receiver and one of the greatest players in the history of the National Football League, attended **Mississippi Valley State University** and was selected by the San Francisco 49ers in the first round of the 1985 NFL Draft.

Singer and musician Lionel Richie attended **Tuskegee Institute** on a tennis scholarship and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in economics. He is a member of Kappa Kappa Psi, a national honor fraternity for band members, and is an active life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Anika Noni Rose earned her bachelor's degree in theater from **Florida A&M University**. The actress and singer is best known for voicing Tiana, Disney's first African American princess from the *Princess and the Frog*. She also starred in *Dreamgirls* and in *Power*.

Ester Rolle attended **Spelman College** before moving to New York City. The Emmy Award-winner was best known for her role as Florida Evans on *Good Times*.



David Banner, the Mississippi rapper whose real name is Lavell William Crump, attended **Southern University**, which also is his mother's alma mater. He served as president of the Student Government Association and graduated with a bachelor's degree in business. He also attended the **University of Maryland Eastern Shore** to pursue a master's in education but left to focus on music.

Sean Combs was a business major at **Howard University** but left after his sophomore year. In 2014, he returned to the university to receive an Honorary Doctorate in Humanities when he delivered the 146th Commencement address.

Brian McKnight's strong falsetto and belting range has earned him 16 Grammy Award nominations. He attended **Oakwood College**, a Seventh-day Adventist university in Huntsville, Alabama, from 1987-1989.

Phylicia Rashad graduated magna cum laude in 1970 from **Howard University** with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. She became the first African American actress to win a Tony Award for Best Actress in a Play for her role as Lena Younger in *A Raisin in the Sun*.



Rick Ross attended **Albany State University** on a football scholarship. The rapper, songwriter, entrepreneur and record executive signed a multimillion-dollar deal with Jay-Z's Def Jam Recordings.

Michael Strahan was named Black College Defensive Player of the Year at **Texas Southern University**. The TV personality played defensive end for 15 seasons with the NFL's New York Giants.

Wale, who was born Olubowale Victor Akintimehin, attended Robert Morris University and **Virginia State University** on a football scholarship before transferring to **Bowie State University**.

Actor, comedian, filmmaker and a member of the Wayans family of entertainers, Keenen Ivory Wayans, attended **Tuskegee University** on an engineering scholarship. One semester before graduation, he left school to focus on comedy. Wayans was the host and creator of the sketch-comedy series *In Living Color* on Fox.

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