

# BLACK COLLEGE TODAY

For Today's Black College Students  
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Number 4  
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July/August  
2023



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A HOT STAR!**

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STUDENTS COMPLETE GOOGLE TECH  
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## COLLEGE GRADUATES CELEBRATE THEIR DAY AND NOW HAVE UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES.

By Dr. James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D.



College graduations have taken center stage. Final examinations are over, and students were approved to receive their degrees. There was unbridled excitement and joy.

The hard work and long hours paid off. Sacrifices that were made by your family members have now made you a member of the select company of college graduates.

Being a college graduate requires discipline, flexibility and commitment, especially during these days as there are more non-traditional students. They are juggling family and work responsibilities while attending school.

According to reports in 2023, 1.9 million students earned bachelor's degrees and 989,000 students earned an associate degree. Further reporting says almost 35% of people 25 and over earned a bachelor's degree.

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There is a debate at some levels about the importance of a college degree. Critics of a college degree say that companies give you the necessary training for the position, thus a college degree is not needed.

Proponents of a college degree say that knowledge acquired while there gives you a foundation for an ever-changing world. They further say attaining a college education will make you more marketable in the workforce.

My old school habits and mores have always been on the side of having a college education. While growing up in North Carolina, my parents stressed the importance of education. Attaining as much education as you could assured you a better quality of life. They believed in that axiom.

In my neighborhood not everyone had a college degree, yet education was still the gateway to success.

Going to high school back in the day meant that you were being taught by men and women who had college degrees and had certificates for teaching.

Teachers were widely respected in my hometown of Winston-Salem. During my high school years, my teachers talked about the importance of going to college.

Fortunately for us, they prepared us for that next step. Some of us received academic scholarships while some of us received athletic scholarships. Regardless, we still had to take and get a good score on the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test).

Our college graduations were filled with pomp and circumstance. Like most senior citizens, we can remember our college days like they were yesterday.

It is my measured opinion that college allows you to grow cognitively and emotionally. In addition, you meet people who are now lifelong friends.

I entered Johnson C. Smith University, an HBCU (Historically Black College and University) located in Charlotte NC as a traditional 1st year student. Over time, I met students from many parts of the world.

I graduated from college more confident and self-assured. During my college years, I developed some life goals and aspirations. The college experience for many of us was a defining moment in our lives.

Still now in 2023, college is a place where you see role models and you have unique and wonderful experiences. Today's students are traveling around the world learning new skills and ways of doing cutting edge research. The learning they get overseas broadens their perspective and how they view the world.

College degrees are recognized in all walks of life. It is still something that people want to achieve. In a way, it is a calling card.

Almost daily, you hear about professional athletes who have made millions of dollars, yet still want that elusive college degree.

Michael Jordan, Venus Williams, Shaquille O'Neal and Todd Bowles are just a few examples of professional athletes and coaches who returned to school. These days, you see more athletes leaving early for professional careers. However, we know that not everyone makes it to the next level. This is why having a degree is so important.

Congratulations and much success to members of the class of 2023. Your goals and dreams are ahead of you. You believed and now you have achieved.

This column is dedicated to the Class of 2023 of Morris Brown College, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Atlanta Georgia.





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# SZA'S FIRST SOLO ALBUM #1 AT TOP 40 RADIO



Grammy award-winning recording artist SZA released a new version of her chart-topping hit song “KILL BILL” featuring DOJA CAT, via TDE/RCA Records. This release comes on the heels of more career achievements this week as the album version of “Kill Bill” earns SZA her first solo #1 at Top 40 radio and breaks the record with 16 weeks at #1 by a female artist on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs chart.

“Kiss Me More,” the first collaboration between DOJA CAT & SZA two dynamic artists, won a Grammy in 2022 for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance.

“Kill Bill” is RIAA-certified 3x Platinum and peaked at #1 on the Billboard Global 200 chart. The accompanying music video, directed by Christian Breslauer, has garnered nearly 55 million views. SZA’s groundbreaking sophomore album SOS debuted and claimed ten non-consecutive weeks at #1 on the Billboard 200, the longest run for an album by a woman in seven years. SOS is currently RIAA-certified 2x Platinum.

SZA will hit the road again with new dates for her remarkable S.O.S. Tour Produced by Live Nation, the European leg of the tour kicked off June 1 in Amsterdam at Ziggo Dome, making stops in Paris, Berlin, London, and more before wrapping up in Dublin at 3Arena on June 21. The tour will return to North America on September 20 at Miami’s Kaseya Center, with stops in Brooklyn, Houston, Los Angeles and more before concluding in Phoenix at Footprint Center on October 29. Visit [szasos.com](https://szasos.com) for full tour routing.

## ABOUT SZA:

Born in St. Louis and raised in Maplewood, NJ, genre-defying, and GRAMMY Award winning recording artist SZA released her major label debut album Ctrl (TDE/RCA) in 2017. Revered for its raw and honest lyrics, it landed at No. 1 on Billboard’s

R&B Albums chart, No. 2 on the R&B/Hip Hop Albums chart and No. 3 on the Billboard 200 chart, according to Nielsen Music. The RIAA-certified 3x Platinum album received five Grammy nominations in 2018 and more than half the songs on Ctrl are currently certified multi-Platinum and Gold. Ctrl remains on the Billboard 200 chart since its release in 2017 and holds the record for the longest run for any Black female artist’s debut album. In 2022 alone it sold over 600,000 units and is the 10th best-selling female album this year in the country and 50th best-selling album in 2022 overall.

To close out the trying year of 2020, SZA gifted fans on Christmas Day with the hopeful track “Good Days.” Grammy-nominated for Best R&B Song, the single quickly became SZA’s greatest gaining solo single release, peaking at #9 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and marking her first time in the chart’s top ten as the main artist. December 2021, SZA scored her second lead artist top 10 on Billboard’s Hot 100 chart with the official release of “I Hate U,” which debuted at #7. The song also entered at #1 on both Spotify and Apple Music US charts and broke the record for the most streamed R&B song by a female artist on Apple Music in its first week. Fan favorite “Shirt” has garnered over 60 million streams globally since its release in October.

On December 9, 2022, SZA released her long-awaited sophomore album SOS. Instantly and universally met with acclaim, SOS debuted and claimed ten non-consecutive weeks at #1 on the Billboard 200, the longest run for an album by a woman in seven years. Standout track “Kill Bill” is RIAA-certified 3x Platinum and earned the #1 spot on the Billboard Global 200 chart and several Apple Music and Spotify charts globally. Currently RIAA-certified 2x Platinum, SOS includes features by Travis Scott, Don Toliver, Phoebe Bridgers, and Ol’ Dirty Bastard; with production by Ctrl hitmaking collaborators Thank-God4Cody and Carter Lang, alongside Jeff Bhasker, Rob Bisel, Benny Blanco, Kenny “Babyface” Edmonds, Emile Haynie, Rodney “Darkchild” Jerkins, Jay Versace, and more.

To this day, SZA continues to set the standard on creativity and songwriting, while shattering records with over 10 billion streams worldwide across all platforms. SZA has won various awards since the release of Ctrl including a 2022 GRAMMY Award for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance for “Kiss Me More” with Doja Cat, Billboard Music Awards’ Top R&B Female Artist, BET Awards’ Best New Artist, BET Soul Train Awards’ Best R&B/Soul Female Artist and Best New Artist, MTV Video Music Awards’ Best Visual Effects for the “All The Stars” with Kendrick Lamar, and NAACP Image Awards’ Outstanding New Artist. In 2019, she won NAACP Image Awards’ Outstanding Duo or Group for “All The Stars” with Kendrick Lamar and Outstanding Soundtrack/Compilation for the Black Panther Soundtrack. SZA also received Billboard’s 2019 Women in Music Rule Breaker award. More recently, SZA was crowned the 2023 Woman of the Year at the Billboard’s Women in Music Awards and won iHeart Radio Music Awards for R&B Artist of the Year and R&B Song of the Year for “I Hate U.”

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## Six Morgan State Computer Science Students Complete Google Tech Exchange Program

A cohort of six Morgan State University students have matriculated through Google's esteemed Tech Exchange program. The students, four juniors and two seniors—all majoring in Computer Science, spent a semester learning from Googlers and Morgan faculty and were honored during a culminating ceremony held recently at Google's South Lake Union office in Seattle, Washington.

Google Tech Exchange serves as a pipeline program that helps prepare Black, Latino, and Native students for technical internships at Google and beyond. The 2023 cohort is made up of 180 students from select Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) in North America. Students learn applied computer science and problem-solving skills and are paired with a mentor to help with professional development and to build social capital and community. Morgan students have

participated in Tech Exchange since the 2018/19 academic year; to-date, 24 students have completed the program.

The six Morgan students that participated in the program this year were Toluwanimi Ayodele (senior), Moja Williams (senior), Shane Miller (junior), Ogundiran Aramide (junior), Lerone Joyner (junior), and Daniel Oluwarotimi (junior).

“We're thrilled to see the continued growth of Tech Exchange over the last six years. This year's cohort is the largest and most diverse to date, with 180 students from eleven HBCUs and five HSIs represented. We aim to ensure the students feel seen, supported, and engaged by the Google community. At the end of the program, students tell us they feel more confident in their abilities as programmers and that they have developed a deeper sense of belonging in the industry.” said Ernest Holmes, The Google Tech Exchange is a semester-long

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virtual academic program that teaches applied computer science and problem-solving skills, while building social capital and community among students hailing from select HBCUs and HSIs. The program's courses are constructed to help participating students prepare for interviewing at Google, help build their knowledge, and give them access to different pathways to the tech industry. It is also designed to introduce the students to the many roles and career options that they may not be aware of or have access to such as Product Managers, UX Researchers, and Machine Learning Scientists.

“With the advent of OpenAI/ChatGPT and the advancements in data analytics, cybersecurity, cloud

computing, and quantum computing, an even greater opportunity for underrepresented groups to contribute to the tech industry has been realized. At the same time, we're transforming how we prepare our students, particularly those studying computer science, to adapt to an evolving industry,” said Paul Wang, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Computer Science. “Each year, each new cohort of Google Tech Exchange students expand their knowledge by way of a cutting-edge curriculum and then applies that knowledge directly while participating in meaningful summer internships, before ultimately completing their matriculation and landing high-paying careers with some of the world's foremost tech companies.

## Tech Exchange Technical Program Manager.



Since 2013, Morgan's Computer Science program has skyrocketed in popularity and has seen its enrollment increase by more than 192%.

Learn more about degree paths in computer science within the School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences and leading-edge research being conducted at Morgan State online.

- For information on Computer Science, Cloud Computer Bioinformatics and Advanced Computing academic degree programs – [morgan.edu/scmns/computerscience](http://morgan.edu/scmns/computerscience)
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# *Spoke 'N' Heard Stop, Say Their Names!!!*

*Stop, Say Their Names will their living be in vain? When is the senseless killing going to stop? It is insane!! Black Lives have been murdered for centuries. I feel sickening pain each day. Their families and loved ones feel pain with each breath they take. The world stands up for justice knowing their breath can easily be taken away. We wait with bated breath for court decisions wondering, will this time be any different? Will our lives be seen? Will our voices be heard? Will they matter? The world stood up, marched, protested and voted to end legal protections for lawless police vigilantes' genocide of Black Lives. The names of lives lost lives on in infamy. They were murdered with no empathy for human life. Our young Black brothers and sisters had so much more Living to do. So much more Giving of themselves, of their Talents, of their LOVE. Now they've risen to Angels and they're giving to us from Heaven above. There is no greater gift than PEACE. There is no greater treasure than Love spread Around the World. There is no greater Talent than uniting creative intellect for Humanity. There is no greater step than each one taken in the name of Dignity. There is no greater hand than a Helping Hand. Confident Self Identity is Powerful coupled with Public Acceptance and Awareness. These are the gifts that our Angels continue to give us. There is no greater Justice than Equal Justice. There Is No Greater lesson than teaching youth to LOVE one another and NOT HATE your sister or brother No Matter WHAT their COLOR.*

*Bernice Ramey  
Bowie State University  
Communications & Journalism - BS*





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# THE TOP 10 WAYS ORGANIZATIONS MEASURE CULTURAL FIT DURING THE HIRING PROCESS

By Robin Kegler

It is not enough to have the qualifications to do a job. Organizations look for people who are the right fit. The right fit includes qualifications, but more importantly, culture fit. It is based on how well you align with the organization's values, beliefs, and interpersonal relationships while on the job. It is also important to note that your values, beliefs, and behavior play a role in whether you choose to accept a job offer because of cultural fit. It is a two-way street. Below are the top 10 ways and the percentage that organizations measure whether you are culturally fit for their organization. We will start with number ten and end with the number one way organizations decide if you fit their organization culturally.

**Number 10: Competency Questionnaires (11%)**- Competency questionnaires are used to measure whether you possess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) to perform a job. These competencies are tied directly to tasks you will perform on the job.

- **Knowledge**- The body of information needed to perform a task.
- **Skill**- The proficiency to perform a learned task.
- **Ability**-The basic capacity for performing a wide range of tasks, acquiring a piece of knowledge, or developing a skill.
- **Other characteristics**- Factors that are not knowledge, skills, or abilities such as personality, willingness, interest, and degrees.

**Number 9: Trail Days (14%)**- This is an opportunity to interact with potential co-workers. You are invited to spend time with those who may be on your team. You trail (shadow) the person doing a job that will be like the one you are applying for.

**Number 8: References (15%)**- Reference checks are used to confirm the accuracy

of the content on your resume. Letters of recommendation express the opinion of others of your ability, previous performance, work habits, character, and success potential. References are an easy way to also confirm the truthfulness of the information you provide to a potential employer.

**Number 7: Simulation Exercises (16%)**- Simulation exercises place you in a situation that you will experience on the job. This is a way to apply the knowledge you have gained over time. It allows you to practice new skills you have learned without the stress of consequences related to making a mistake.

**Number 6: Cultural Fit Questionnaires (21%)**- The questions you are asked to respond to are based on what is right for the organization you want to join. Another way of looking at cultural fit is to identify ways you can contribute. A sample question you may be asked is, "Can you describe the work environment in which you perform best?"

**Number 5: CVs/Resumes (22%)**- Resumes are summaries of your professional and educational background. Your CVs and resumes should include qualifications for a position in addition to the basic information (contact, academic success, etc.). Although resumes are basic tools organizations use in the hiring process, it does not always predict the future success of an applicant.

**Number 4: Interviews by Phone (27%)**- Phone interviews require less preparation by the interviewers and allow them to have your information (resume, recommendation letters, potential questions) in front of them during the interview. It is also cost-effective.

**Number 3: Assessment Centers (34%)**- Assessment centers are an employee selection method used by organizations

that provide the opportunity for you to participate in various job-related activities. One of those activities will be simulated (see Number 7) and rated by several trained evaluators. The advantage of using multiple assessors is that it reduces the potential for selection bias.

**Number 2: Personality Questionnaires (38%)**- Personality inventories are psychological assessments designed to measure different aspects of your personality. These inventories fall into two categories: Tests of normal personality (measure traits you exhibit in your everyday life such as extraversion, shyness, friendliness, etc.) and Tests of psychopathology (measures abnormal behavior to determine whether applicants have serious psychological problems such as bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. This second test is primarily used in clinical settings and the selection of law enforcement officers. It can only be administered after a conditional offer of employment has been made.

**Number 1: Interviews/Face-to-Face (95%)**- Interviews are still the most popular method used in the hiring process. This would also include virtual interviews. Employment interviews allow interviewers to ask you questions and then decide whether to make an offer based on your answers to the questions and how you answered them.

When you think back to the jobs you had (part-time, summer, internship), what methods did your interviewer and organization use? When all was said and done, did you feel you were able to make a positive contribution to the organizations you agreed to work for? Whichever method you see now or in the future, approach each one with integrity and give your best effort. Become the applicant and future employee the organization must have.



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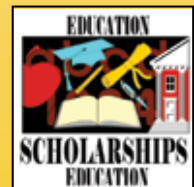
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# FEDEX-HBCU STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM STARTS SECOND YEAR



## *FedEx-HBCU Student Ambassador Program Starts Second Year*

For the second year, students from eight Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) are engaging with FedEx team members to help the students to prepare for the workforce once they graduate.

The second cohort of the FedEx-HBCU Student Ambassador Program kicked off in Los Angeles, California on Friday, February 24 – Saturday, February 25 with a career exposure and leadership experience where Ambassadors met with FedEx leadership. During their visit, the Ambassadors also attended the 54th annual NAACP Image Awards, an organization and event that FedEx sponsors.

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Throughout the year, the Ambassadors will participate in sessions on everything from how to write a resume, prepare for an interview, and even take part in mock interviews.

This group of ambassadors represents eight different HBCUs:

- Jackson State University (Jackson, Miss.)
- Tennessee State University (Nashville, Tenn.)
- LeMoyne-Owen College (Memphis, Tenn.)
- Mississippi Valley State University (Itta Bena, Miss.)
- Lane College (Jackson, Tenn.)
- Paul Quinn College (Dallas, Texas)
- Miles College (Fairfield, Ala.)
- Fayetteville State University (Fayetteville, N.C.)

The program is part of a \$5 million donation made by FedEx to this group of HBCUs to help create valuable education opportunities and job readiness.

Congratulations to the new ambassadors!

Visit [FedExCares.com](https://www.FedExCares.com) and check out the HBCU Fact Sheet to learn more about how FedEx supports HBCUs.





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# "Hair on a Budget"

The cost of tuition, lab fees, books, supplies, room & board and clothing for college life can be exhausting to think about, not to mention...the money it takes to stay current on your beauty regimen.

### Remember when...

I'm sure you've heard your mom or grandma say "I remember when going to the salon only cost \$10. And you could even get a relaxer for \$15." Now you can barely get your edges relaxed for \$10. Lol. Those days are far gone. The average cost of maintaining your natural hair at the salon is somewhere around \$65 - \$85, and let's not even think about the price of a weave sew-in, averaging \$250 - \$350 and up!

### The workaround

So you gotta keep a decent doo on campus, but your salon funds are short? Here are a few tips to help you maintain the style you want on a tight budget:

- Take a salon break every now and then and save money. Try buying your favorite hair care products for a DIY at home wash, condition and style.
- If you like your hair pressed, you may have to spend a few extra bucks on a quality flat iron or curling iron. Investing in quality hair appliances will save you money in the long run by

preventing you from causing damage to your tresses by using poor quality ones.

- Take a break from wearing weave all the time. Embrace wearing your own hair. And if you just have to do an install, be sure to maintain the hair when you take it out. Wash, condition, dry and store it properly to use later, instead of having to purchase new bundles for a new sew-in.
- And, if you just have to go to the salon, do your research and locate some of the cosmetology training colleges or classes on campus where you can get your hair done for a lot less than going to a beauty salon.

### Beau...these Tips are for You!

Save a few dollars by wash your hair at home instead of paying the barber to wash *and* cut your hair.

Ask for student discounts on haircuts at the local barber shops.

And, instead of going to the barber shop, head on over to the barber college. You might be surprised at how well they cut hair.

Until the next time!

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# Planning For a SUCCESSFUL SEMESTER

*“Prior preparation prevents poor performance.”*

JAMES BAKER

*By Dr. Felicia Durden*

Another semester is upon us and I want to help you think about the best way to be prepared to have an amazing year. This month we will touch on 5 things you can focus upon to ensure you are set up for success. As the quote above notes, when we properly prepare we are more apt to have positive outcomes. Let's dig in discuss the 4 tips that will help you start your year with out right.

**Tip #1: Organize your Study Area:**

Get organized from day 1. Before your classes start set up your study area. Having a study area that is clutter free is important. It does not have to be a large space, but make sure you have writing utensils a good light and space to write. This might seem like a no brainer, but I know a lot of students who find that by switching from studying on the couch or in their bed and achieving more success. For one thing, they are more alert when sitting at their desk space and it turns their brain in that they are in work mode so they tend to have less distractions.

**Tip #2: Track Your Assignment Due Dates:**

Another thing to focus on is tracking your assignment due dates. I have so

many students forget to turn in their work on time due to not tracking when assignments are due. Those late points can be the difference between earning a passing grade. One way to this is to use a online calendar tracker that will send you a reminder when assignments are due. I suggest having it remind you a week ahead of time and again a few days before so you do not miss anything.

**Tip #3 Check Your Teachers Out Beforehand:**

These days it is very easy to check out how your teachers perform. Websites like ratemyprofessors.com can provide pivotal information on how other students rate the professor. I am a strong proponent of ensuring you look up the ratings as you can get some very good information on how other students who have had the teacher rate their performance. You can find out their teaching and grading style. Word of caution be sure to take the ratings with a grain of salt. Read all of the ratings as different students focus on different things in regards to the ratings.

**Tip #4 Set goals for yourself:**

Goal setting isa great tip to take into

your plan for a positive school year. I would suggest that you create study goals. Research has shown that we are more likely to complete goals that are set in an affirmative voice than when we put them in a negative tone. That means that you want your goal to be something like “I will study for 1 hour for every class.” This is a positive affirmation as it states what you will do.

I wish you all an amazing school year. Know that you can have a positive semester if you determine that you will have one.

*Make it a great semester!*

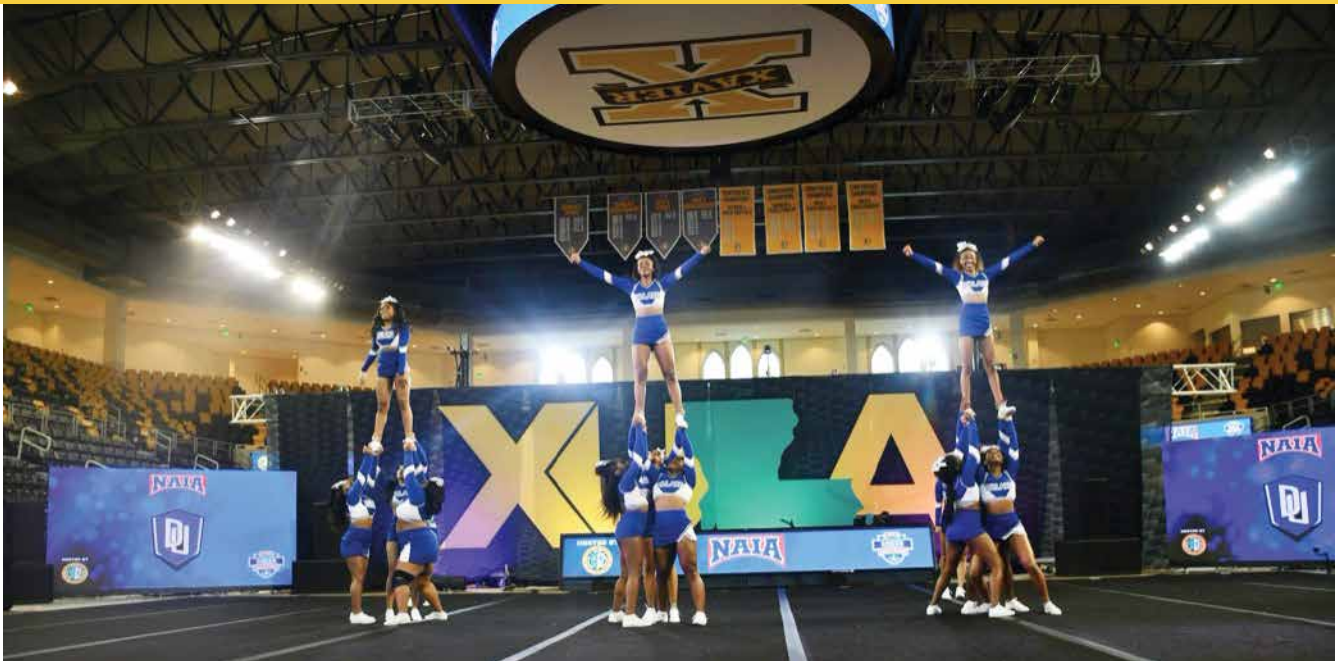
Dr. Felicia Durden is an accomplished Educator with over twenty years of experience in Education. She holds her Doctorate of Education degree in Educational Leadership, a Master's Degree in Curriculum & Instruction, and a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature. Dr. Durden has taught grades K-12, served as an Assistant Director of Reading and Writing, Principal, and is an Associate Superintendent for the Arizona Department of Education. In addition, she has taught English Composition at the College level as an adjunct instructor for over eight years. Dr. Durden has a passion for assisting student growth in reading and writing.

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## *Dillard's cheerleading team earns* **FIRST COMPETITIVE WIN IN UNIVERSITY'S HISTORY**

Dillard University Cheer Devils competing during Battle in the Big Easy, hosted by Xavier University.

The Dillard University Cheer Devils earned the first competitive win in Dillard's history at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Battle in the Big Easy that took place at Xavier University on Feb 9, 2023.

The team placed second overall with a first-round score of 74.08, a second-round score of 75.9 and a final score of 75.44.

The competition team comprised 18 cheerleaders, including competition captains Kaylyn Turner '23 and Ashantis Balancier '25, who were all led by Coach Courtney Cadore.

Cadore selected Turner and Balancier as the competition captains for "displaying consistent leadership throughout the season, stepping in when needed, having a strong cheer skill set and for their overall student-athlete attributes," she said.

Turner, who is a senior nursing major from Jackson, Mississippi, shares how it felt leading the team to a historic moment.

"Stepping on that mat, knowing each one of them deserved the feeling of success because of how hard we worked through the setbacks over the month leading to this moment, is what pushed me to entrust that Coach didn't make a

mistake choosing me. When positive energy is given, positive energy is received; no matter what happened on the mat, we didn't let it defeat our spirits and that's a team I'll lead into competition any day," said Turner.

The cheer devils spent their entire cheer season preparing for the competition. The team worked on strengthening their tumbling skills at Louisiana Tumble-N-Cheer, increasing their stunting skill set, having choreography sessions, and adding another practice day to their schedule.

"It feels rewarding to earn our first win for Dillard University Cheerleading! It has been an honor to watch the growth of the team since my arrival as the head coach in 2021. The preparation and courage that my student-athletes continue to showcase was rewarded this season and we look forward to continuing to excel," said Cadore.

After the historic win, the team's competition season came to an end. They did not qualify for the 2023 NAIA Competitive Cheer National Championship in Ypsilanti, Michigan. However, the team remains optimistic about their future.

"For the future of the team to keep the wins going it's all about commitment not just physically but mentally as well. I believe that Dillard will go far in cheer. We just have to have faith and stay committed to the mindset," said Balancier, sophomore psychology major from Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

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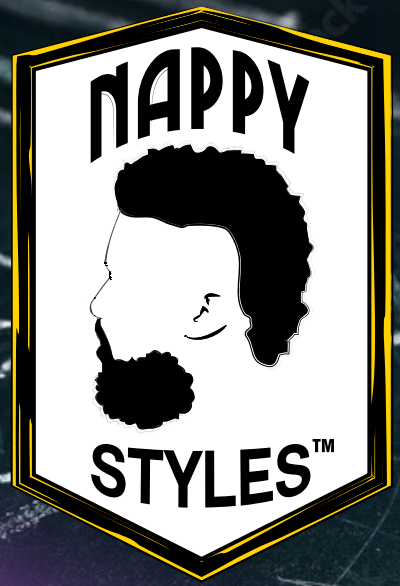
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**RUST COLLEGE SENIOR**  
*Shawn Hannah*  
**NAMED THE**  
**BSW STUDENT OF THE YEAR**



Shawn Hannah, a graduating senior, social work major at Rust College, has been named the 2023 BSW Student of the Year.

Annually, one student from each accredited social work program in the state is nominated to receive the NASW-Mississippi Social Work Student of the Year Award. Each student is recognized for outstanding academic achievement, commitment to the Code of Ethics, leadership on and off campus, political and legislative engagement, and contribution to a positive image of the social work profession. She was honored at a ceremony on March 23rd in Jackson, MS. Ms. Hannah was bestowed this honor from among her peers from BSW colleges and universities across Mississippi. “She has been an outstanding student during her tenure at Rust College. I have known Mrs. Hannah over the past 3 years, as her professor, advisor and as Chair of the Social Work Department. She is dedicated to the field of social work and consistently exhibits the utmost respect for clients, teachers, students, and her community. She takes her education seriously,” said Department Chair Debra Butler.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards for social workers, and to advance sound social policies.

Shawn Hannah is a native Okolona, Mississippi and a graduate of Aberdeen High School. Mrs. Hannah has been able to meet the demands of pursuing her education with excellence after having been out of school for nearly 36 years. She decided to return to college and complete her degree at the age of 53. She is very motivated to excel in the pursuit of her dreams and goals, and none of life’s challenges seems

to deter her. She has maintained exceptional grades with a grade point average of 3.9. on a 4.0 grading scale. Ms. Hannah can use adversity as motivation.

In addition to her studies at Rust College, she brings a wealth of experience of working in the community and in educational settings. She has been on the front lines in the administrative arm of several committees related to policy planning and implementation, fiscal budgets, allocations process, fundraising, and so much more. This includes her work with United Way of Lowndes County on the Executive Board of Directors; Notary Public for the State of Mississippi; Davidson Chapel Church Musician; Sally Kate Winters Family Services Board of Directors; Board of Directors; Davidson Praise Dance Team Group Leader; Mississippi Parent of the Year - Third Congressional District; West Point School District Council President; Mississippi PTA Leadership - Vice President; Mississippi PTA Convention Chairperson; National PTA Leadership Committee – Mississippi Representative; Mississippi PTA North Mississippi Educational Trainer; The Renaissance Member of Rebuilding Our Communities President/Co-Founder; Bright Horizons Board Member; and Community Event Planner.

Her scholarly activities and accomplishments while at Rust College include serving on the NASW Student Liaison Committee (2022); NASW Student Representative Committee member (2022); NASW-MS Advocacy Day Member of National Association of Social Workers (NASW); Facilitator for Breakout Session at NASW-MS Advocacy Day 2022; President’s List Honor Roll; E. A. Smith Honors Program Inductee; Presidential Scholarship, and SGA member. Her awards include: the Jefferson Award for Outstanding Public Service and the West Point School District Parent of the Year Award.

# TSU GRADUATE STUDENTS SELECTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS TENNESSEE HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION'S AGENDA 21 INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

By Emmanuel Freeman



Two Tennessee State University graduate students have been selected for the Tennessee Hospital Association's (THA) Agenda 21 Internship Program. J'la Jenkins, and Bege Mallam, both public health majors, were among 12 students from schools across the country who participated in a 12-week, paid supervised learning experience for qualified graduate students in healthcare administration or a related field.

A native of Alabama, Jenkins, who is pursuing her master's degree in public health, will intern at Vanderbilt Medical Center, while Mallam, who is from Nigeria, and also pursuing his master's degree in public health, will intern at West Tennessee Healthcare in Jackson, Tennessee.

Jenkins was not immediately available to comment on her selection, but Mallam said he is grateful to TSU for the support he has received and honored to be one of only 12 selected to be a part of the prestigious THA internship program.

"I'm humbled to be able to explore the opportunities in healthcare and to experience the practice of what we learn in class," Mallam said. "Thank you for the recognition, and here's to illuminating a path toward a brighter future in healthcare!"

Mallam said his long-term goal is to engage in medical outreach and health interventions among marginalized communities. TSU College of Health Sciences Dean Ronald Barredo said the public health program continues to produce quality students who will go on to excel in the field because of opportunities like this provided by THA.

"We are extremely proud of the selection of J'la Jenkins and Bege Mallam for the Tennessee Hospital Association's Agenda 21 Internship Program," said Dr. Barredo. "Their selection embodies not only the mission of the College of Health Sciences in preparing tomorrow's healthcare leaders, but also — and more importantly — the institution's motto of Think, Work, Serve."

Dr. Wendelyn Inman is interim director of the TSU public health program. She said she is extremely proud of Jenkins and Mallam.

"Tennessee State University is noted for producing outstanding leaders," Inman said. "With the training Jenkins and Mallam are getting from TSU, combined with their experience from the Tennessee Hospital Association's Agenda 21 Internship Program, they get to step into leadership roles."

Designed to increase diversity in hospital executive leadership, the Agenda 21 Internship Program provides selected candidates with additional exposure, knowledge and skills, that prepare them for a successful career in the healthcare industry. Through close work with administrators and staff, Jenkins and Mallam will gain hands-on experience as part of their hospitals' leadership teams.

"The Agenda 21 Internship Program has operated for 28 years with the mission of providing learning opportunities in Tennessee hospitals for students who are from minority and under-represented groups in hospital executive leadership," said Karizma Whitfield, Agenda 21 program manager at THA.

Applications for the Agenda 21 Internship Program are accepted in the fall semester each year and students are placed the following spring with THA member hospitals for their summer internships. Learn more about the Agenda 21 Internship Program at <https://tha.com/focus-areas/agenda-21-internship-program/>.

# TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY HOSTS CAMP TO INTRODUCE GIRLS TO OPPORTUNITIES IN STEM



Texas Southern University is hosting 40 rising seventh through ninth grade girls for the GEMS Camp. GEMS, which stands for Girls interested in Engineering, Mathematics, and Science, is a 501(c)3 based out of Dallas.

The GEMS Camp was founded in 2010 by STEM educator Saki Milton to close the gender and racial gap in STEM studies and careers. Since its founding, 90 percent of participants have come from Title 1 schools, 96 percent are Black and Latina, and 60 percent are English Second Language students. Funding for the camp at TSU is provided by TSU's Division of Research and Innovation and the TSU Foundation's CenterPoint Energy FEM STEM grant. This is TSU's first year hosting.

During this residential camp, the 40 scholars, who are primarily from the Greater Houston area, utilize a five

karat system in the areas of academics, leadership, service, career, and creativity. They're participating in math and science coursework and working with mentors to learn about self-confidence and conflict resolution, among other leadership traits. They're also hearing from women in STEM who are sharing their stories of thriving in the field.

"We are excited to welcome these GEMS to the campus of Texas Southern University to engage in STEM education, activities, and to build relationships with like-minded young scholars," said Assistant Professor of Biology Dr. Erica Cassimere. "The STEM field is ripe with opportunities, and our vision is to plant seeds of what's possible in the minds of these young ladies who we believe are our future healthcare professionals, engineers, computer scientists, researchers, rocket scientists, and great thinkers. We are committed to doing our part to build a pipeline of future female STEM leaders."



## Internship Opportunities

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Interns support the research and analysis-based mission of the CEA by assisting the staff in researching a wide range of macroeconomic, microeconomic, and international issues and conducting statistical analysis and data collection, among other responsibilities. Interns also earn valuable experience applying their quantitative and qualitative research skills on a daily basis and learn new ways to approach questions from CEA economists.

Administrative duties to support the work of the Council are also involved.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Program participants must be U.S. citizens, at least 18 years or older before the first day of the program, and meet the following criteria:

Currently enrolled in an accredited undergraduate or graduate degree program at a college, community college, or university (two- to four-year institution)

Have demonstrated interest in economics, statistics, mathematics, public policy, or finance with a strong academic record and passion for public service

Have excellent writing and analytical skills

Have experience using Microsoft Office and conducting research and analysis

Preferred candidates will have experience with Stata (or a similar statistical software)

Required to obtain and maintain a favorable security determination and undergo pre-employment drug testing

Required to attest to their vaccination status and must adhere to any White House-determined COVID-19 testing, masking, and/or social distancing guidance.

### APPLICATION INFORMATION

We are now accepting applications for the upcoming Fall 2023 internship program.

Applications for the fall can be submitted through June 30, 2023.

Selected applicants will be notified no later than August 11, 2023.

If you are interested in applying, please email PDFs of your resume, a transcript, and a cover letter to:

President's Council of Economic Advisers

Email: [recruiting@cea.eop.gov](mailto:recruiting@cea.eop.gov)

# UAPB ATTENDS SECOND ANNUAL BMS LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAM IN NEW JERSEY

UAPB was one of five historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) participating in a second annual Leadership Exchange Program sponsored by Bristol Myers Squibb (BMS) in May 2023. The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff (UAPB) group visited BMS's Lawrenceville and New Brunswick, New Jersey sites.



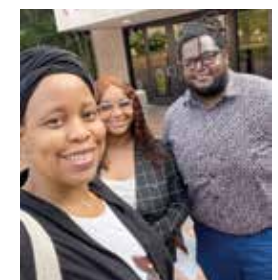
This year's Leadership Exchange Program included UAPB students in addition to UAPB faculty and staff. The Leadership Exchange Program is part of the BMS Tomorrow's Innovators initiative, described on their site as an initiative that builds a sustainable bridge for diverse talent from HBCUs to the biopharma industry.

UAPB joined Howard University, North Carolina A&T, Morgan State University, and Florida A&M University at the Exchange. The UAPB group included faculty and staff members, Dr. Anissa Buckner, Dr. Tansesha Ford, Dr. Zeeshan Habeeb, Ms. Angelisa Henry, Mrs. Pamela Jenkins, and UAPB Spring 2023 juniors majoring in Biology or Business Administration. The UAPB students included business administration majors Tolliver Hunt, Delashay Lawrence, and Octavia Orr and biology majors Jasmin Preston and Saniya McCoy.

the Biopharma industry and on discovering the BMS skill sets for now and the future. The panel discussions were moderated by the organization's Senior Director of Global Inclusion and Diversity and infused with activities that engaged students with attendees from the other universities in attendance and BMS professionals. The day concluded with a Career Showcase and Networking Event, where students talked and networked with the day's panelists. Dr. Tanesha Ford, UAPB Assistant Professor, School of Business and Management, said, "It was great exposure for our students to engage with other students and faculty from the different universities. I enjoyed connecting with others and networking. The engagement that our students had was amazing. They asked questions and participated very well in the sessions."

The program started with an evening of arrival "meet and greet" dinner meeting. The next day they included a trip to the BMS Lawrenceville Campus, where panel presentations covered topics on understanding

The final day of the Leadership Exchange included a trip to the BMS New Brunswick Campus to the Pharmaceutical Development Center, where the group heard from their Bio-Separation and Compendia Group and received information on what they would see on the lab tour. The final BMS destination was the New Brunswick-Princeton Pike location, where the HBCU groups heard from top BMS executives, covering areas such as Analytics, Business Insights, Corporate Tax, Global Internal Audit & Assurance, Treasury, Finance Operations, Business Process & Governance, World-wide and Corporate Marketing, Commercialization, and Pharmaceutical Patents. The session included an interactive breakout session on faculty and student hot topics.





# UMES named recipient of \$10 million NEXTGEN grant

*USDA funding will be used to help build diversity in future agricultural professionals*



The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture announced that the University of Maryland Eastern Shore is the lead institution on a \$10 million collaborative NEXTGEN grant project.



Dr. Stephan Tubene, associate director of the 1890 Universities Center for Global Food Security and Defense.

Its goal is aimed at building a diverse future federal workforce in Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences and is part of the USDA’s \$262.5 million investment in institutions of higher education announced June 21.

Dr. Stephan Tubene, associate director of the 1890 Universities Center for

Global Food Security and Defense housed at UMES, is the director for the five-year project in partnership with Florida A&M University, Kentucky State University and Southern University and A&M College.

Activities will center around “generating and sustaining the next generation of FANH professionals through international experiential learning, outreach and engagement.”

“The project builds upon the momentum of the Center of Excellence,” said Tubene, who also serves as professor and acting chair of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Resource Sciences at UMES. “Partnerships will be fostered for paid impactful domestic and international internships, outreach projects, and career development for students to better understand how their academic plans can lead to a career, particularly with the federal government.”

The “From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals Program” is supported by funds provided through the American Rescue Plan Act (as amended by Section 22007 of the Inflation Reduction Act) to enable eligible institutions to “engage, recruit and train” students

from underserved communities with the goal of increasing graduation rates among students to add to the diversity of FANH fields and USDA employees.

The \$262.5 million investment will “provide training and support to more than 20,000 future food and agricultural leaders through 33 project partners,” of which UMES is among.

“The vision we have at NIFA is to feed and nourish all Americans and create economic opportunity for more American families. Equity and diversity are the two central elements in this vision. One goal of the NextGen program is to identify, inspire and prepare our youth, particularly in underrepresented communities, to be the next generation of hunger fighters and agricultural problem solvers. This is the right thing to do and the right time,” said Dr. Manjit Misra, director of NIFA.

“We are thankful for the USDA-NIFA’s confidence in UMES spearheading this relevant and monumental task of helping it achieve equitable participation and representation not only in its programs and services, but in the broad range of agriculture-related career opportunities that exist today and in the years to come,” said Dr. Heidi M. Anderson, UMES’ 16th president.

## HEALTH CONSCIOUS 101: BENEFITS OF SPIRULINA

by Jessica Miller



Every morning I have been taking the time to add spirulina to my smoothie. Which has been life changing for me that I have to share the wonderful benefits and how it can be a staple for your overall health. You might wonder if it has a taste? It does have a mild taste but when mixed it is hardly noticeable. What I love about it is it's safe for everyone and packed with so many nutrients that's needed daily for the body to function correctly.

What is Spirulina?

Spirulina is a type of blue-green microalgae that is able to grow in both fresh and salt water and is consumed by humans and other animals. There are two species of the spirulina plant, including *Arthrospira platensis* and *Arthrospira maxima*. You will usually find it in powder or pill form. I usually prefer the powder form because it will get in bloodstream faster

Benefits of Spirulina

- Spirulina delivers essential vitamins and minerals.
- It contains notable amounts of calcium, niacin, potassium, magnesium, B vitamins, and iron, Spirulina is particularly high in vitamin B12, which helps make up your DNA and is key for supporting

healthy blood and nerve cells. It's also an especially good source of iron, providing about 2 grams per 1 tablespoon.

- Spirulina contains plant compounds that help protect eye health.

Spirulina is also a notable source of phytonutrients—plant-based compounds (in this case, plant pigments) that are thought to provide protective health. More specifically, spirulina is rich in a certain group of phytonutrients called carotenoids.

- Spirulina offers important fatty acids.

Overall, spirulina is low in fat, but it is a plant-based source of omega-3 fatty acids and omega-6 fatty acids, including gamma linoleic oleic acid.

- Spirulina is full of antioxidant plant compounds that fight inflammation.

Spirulina contains a high concentration of bioactive plant compounds, including polyphenols and plant pigments, which have important antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects in the body, helping to protect your cells against

free radical damage and oxidative stress that can lead to inflammation and disease

- Spirulina may be helpful in promoting healthy gut bacteria growth.

This water plant can help support gut health with the ability to improve the growth of probiotics (healthy gut bacteria).

### Smoothie Recipe

1 cup oats  
1 cup of frozen strawberries  
(or desire fruits)  
1 tablespoon peanut butter  
1 teaspoon spirulina  
½ teaspoon of raw honey  
16oz Oatmilk (Or your choice  
of non-dairy milk)

Spirulina can be found at your local grocery, health, or vitamin store.

### DISCLAIMER

Spirulina has been found to be an anticoagulant, or blood thinner, so if you have any clotting disorders, it's always best to discuss trying spirulina with your healthcare provider first.





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## **PROJECT INSPIRED BY “PEANUTS” CHARACTER FRANKLIN ARMSTRONG PROVIDES \$100,000 IN ENDOWMENTS FOR ASPIRING ARTISTS AT HAMPTON UNIVERSITY**

Peanuts Worldwide fulfills the second of two gifts under “The Armstrong Project” – an initiative benefiting students at Hampton University. The project, named in honor of Charles Schulz’ iconic character, Franklin Armstrong, includes an annual scholarship for students studying arts, communications, animation, or entertainment.

To enhance the program experience, The Armstrong Project offers mentorship and internship opportunities for students with individuals and companies in entertainment fields such as animation, film, and television.

“We are grateful to Peanuts Worldwide LLC for its investment in our students and other HBCUs involved in this initiative,” said Hampton University Chancellor and Provost Dr. JoAnn Haysbert. “Their commitment to renew will help ensure our students continue to receive a world-class education.”

Cartoonist Robb Armstrong, a longtime friend and colleague of Charles Schulz and the inspiration for Franklin’s last name, has been a consistent source of support throughout the creation of this important program and applauds the launch of The Armstrong Project. “I’m very excited for the young aspiring artists [at Hampton University] who may have their lives changed by Peanuts, just as my life was changed by the inspiration and mentorship of Charles Schulz,” Armstrong said. “Sparky (Schulz) was a thoughtful and generous man who took seriously the hopes and dreams of young people. It is my hope that he would be thrilled by the potential of The Armstrong Project to help young people fulfill their ambitions.”

The character of Franklin emerged from a correspondence between Charles Schulz and a California schoolteacher named Harriet Glickman. Glickman wrote to Schulz after the assassination of Martin Luther King, suggesting that the introduction of Black characters into the comic strip could help change the “vast sea of misunderstanding, fear, hate and violence.” After much introspect and consideration, Schulz felt this was a step he could take authentically and introduced Franklin in the summer of 1968, making history in the process.

“It is incredibly moving to me that The Armstrong Project is intended to create positive change in the lives of young Black animators and artists, just as the character of Franklin did so many years ago,” said Jean Schulz, widow of Charles Schulz.

### **ABOUT THE ARMSTRONG PROJECT**

As an enhanced scholarship program, The Armstrong Project will also ensure mentorship and internship opportunities for the students with individuals and companies in entertainment fields such as animation, film, and television.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.peanuts.com/the-armstrong-project>

### **ABOUT THE TAKE CARE WITH PEANUTS INITIATIVE**

With the Peanuts Gang leading by (often humorous!) example, Take Care with Peanuts inspires and motivates action through online messages, kid-friendly animated videos, charitable opportunities, special curricula, social media engagement, pop-up experiences, and much more—reminding us to press ‘Pause’ and appreciate ourselves, those around us, and this place we call home.



## Meet the Two Xavierites Named 2022 - 2023 American Heart Association HBCU Scholars



At Xavier University of Louisiana, students are encouraged from the moment they arrive on campus to pursue excellence for the rest of their lives. In pursuit of that excellence, Xavierites Mallory Johnson and Brayanna “Sunshine” Jones have had their hard work rewarded through their selection as American Heart Association (AHA) HBCU Scholars for the 2022-2023 school year.

The AHA HBCU Scholar program, like Xavier’s College of Pharmacy has been doing since it was established in 1927, seeks to close the gap between health disparities and achieve health equity by increasing the number of Black students who apply and are accepted into graduate science, research, and public health programs. It has been shown that medical professionals from underrepresented backgrounds tend to practice in those communities where systemic obstacles and health disparities are most apparent. The program selects two students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

and gives them opportunities and resources to network with each other and other working health professionals through workshops, connect them with mentorship to support, and offer valuable research and lab experience. For Johnson, participating in this program was the opportunity of a lifetime.

“I really liked the program...Not only did I gain research experience, but the program is so catered to taking care of all of us because we [as Black and African Americans] are such a small margin in the STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics] fields,” said Johnson, a sophomore studying biology pre-med at Xavier. “There are a lot of opportunities out there, but this one is such a close-knit program. Everyone is there for you. It was just very personal, and I enjoyed that.”

Johnson was interested in coming to Xavier because of

the university’s history of fostering a sense of community and its reputation of being one of the top producers of Black graduates who go on to finish medical school. After hearing about the AHA HBCU program from a family friend, Johnson hurried to gather the materials to apply for such a well-suited opportunity for her. The promise of mentorship and lab experience is what drew her to the program. The first in her family to go to college to be a physician, she did not have a roadmap to follow and, therefore, was eager to participate and receive the guidance and mentorship from the program that would be invaluable for her on her path. She recommends that others seeking



a mentor to help guide them through the daunting journey of becoming a physician also apply for the program.

For Jones, the 2023-2024 Miss Xavier University of Louisiana and an avid participant in student affairs at Xavier, the program felt perfectly catered to her.

Jones, a Louisiana local and biology pre-med major on the cusp of completing her junior year, chose to come to Xavier because of the familial environment the university developed and its location. The AHA HBCU program's design to cater to HBCU students, as well as the AHA emphasizing research on cardiovascular disease, appealed to her the most, especially since she had family members affected by that disease.

"The American Heart Association is known for the cardiovascular aspect of science, and at the time, my 'parrain,' my godfather, he had passed away due to cardiovascular disease," said Jones, "I thought the stars kind of aligned. It was kind of like a sign for me during that time to go more in-depth with, 'Okay, how can I learn more about cardiovascular disease, especially in underrepresented communities since it affected someone personal and close to me?'"

For Jones, what was truly valuable about the experience was hearing from health professionals who not only shared a similar cultural identity as her but also went down the path she wishes to embark on herself. These professionals were able to share not only their experiences and struggles but also their perseverance and resiliency in the face of those struggles, information that Jones found encouraging and inspiring.

"Hearing people in leadership at the American Heart Association...them being minorities and telling their stories, and dropping gems and motivation to keep pushing forward is one of the most valuable things," said Jones, "As an African American, especially an African American woman, I feel as though we can have imposter syndrome and feel as though we don't belong here, we're not as good as our counterparts, and there's so many microaggressions and racism and discrimination and things we have to overcome just to get the same respect as others. Just hearing their stories and their journeys and how they got to where they are. That perseverance and resiliency- It really motivated me to continue on this path."



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# FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS HISTORY, VSU NAMES TWO FEMALE STUDENTS, BOTH STEM MAJORS, AS CO-VALEDICTORIANS



Joy Watson and Blaise Davenport earned a perfect 4.0 GPA as Class of 2023 Student Academic Leaders.

Virginia State University has recognized Joy Watson and Blaise Davenport as Class of 2023 Co-Valedictorian. This is the first time in university history that two females, both STEM majors, have received this academic honor. They were recognized as part of the 2023 Commencement Ceremony on May 13, 2023.

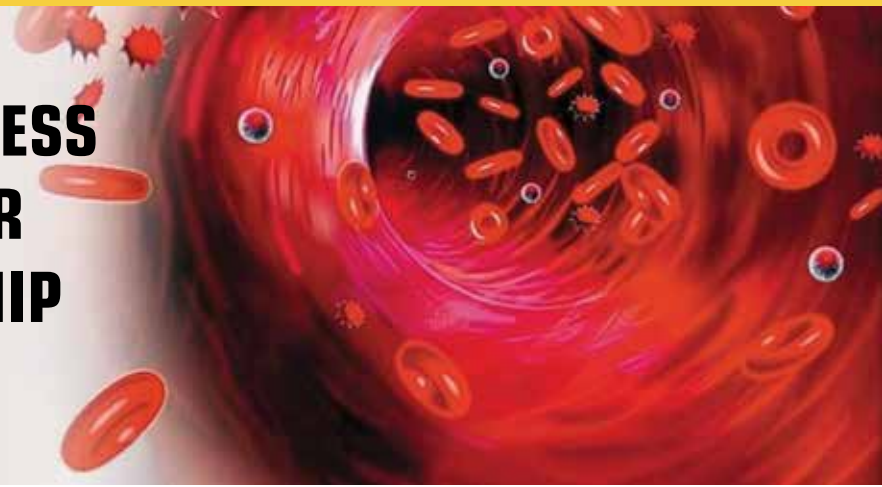
Joy Watson, who also held the titles of Miss VSU 2022-2023 and 2023 Miss National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame, carried a double major in Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering Technology while maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA throughout her college career. Watson will continue her education in graduate school at VSU.

Blaise Davenport maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA while majoring in Computer Information Systems with a minor in Cybersecurity and Forensics. She studied abroad in England as a visiting student at Oxford University and won numerous Cybersecurity awards and honors from the Department of Defense. Davenport will continue her education at Columbia University and Carnegie Mellon University on a full scholarship.

Both young women, also former members of the Trojan Explosion Marching Band, exude overall VSU Trojan excellence. Through stellar academic achievements and admirable student life engagement, Watson and Davenport are examples of Greater Happens Here. They are both trailblazers who found their GREATER AT VSU. Virginia State University is proud to call them both VSU Alums.

# DEMERY USES HER OWN CHRONIC ILLNESS AS INSPIRATION FOR SUMMER INTERNSHIP AT BE THE MATCH

by Gabrielle Isaac Allison



Bre'Asia Demery '24, a Psychology major at JCSU, was diagnosed with sickle cell disease when she was just four years old.

Now a rising senior, Demery has decided to dedicate her summer to Be the Match, a stem cell and bone marrow

donor registry, to help those who, like her, are impacted with blood-related sicknesses and other diseases.

“Living with sickle cell you never know when you’ll get sick,” said Demery. “Many of my friends have had a stem cell transplant through this foundation and it gave them amazing results. I chose to intern with Be the Match because I know what it feels like to have no voice. If I can be the voice of these patients who need it, I’ll be satisfied in life.”



*Demery and Dr. Bryant*  
PHOTO  
COURTESY  
OF NOVANT  
HEALTH

Demery found her voice in Dr. Paulette Bryant, one of her doctors who helped her cope physically and emotionally with the chronic disease. Sickle cell can cause infections, chronic pain and fatigue and disproportionately impacts the Black community, with one in 13 Black or African-American babies born with sickle cell trait and one in 365 born with the disease.

Be the Match focuses on using cheek swab test kits to match patients with donors. During her internship, Demery will collect the cheek swab samples and host events where she will speak about her own battle with chronic illness and

how anyone interested can help those in search of a donor match.

She found the internship by staying active on LinkedIn. A talent acquisition partner at Be the Match reached out to her to ask her if she would be interested.

“I jumped at the opportunity and I continued to be my authentic self as I reflected on how my journey is similar to their current patients,” she said. “My prayer in life is that if I could reach one person and help change their life, I’d be happy and this internship with Be the Match grants me that opportunity.”

Demery said that JCSU helped her break out of her shell. She credits Kenyatta Reed, Jennifer Joyner and former staff member Kabreel McEachin for the opportunities they gave her to cultivate her skills.

“They saw something in me I didn’t see in myself,” she said. “They pushed me even though I didn’t want to be pushed.”

She said Dr. Ruth Greene and Dr. Douglas Cooper, professors in the Psychology department, have been great support systems along with President Clarence D. Armbrister; Anthony Brown, director of Student Leadership and Engagement; and George Buggs III, an academic advisor.

And, of course, Demery said she is thankful to her friends, pastors and family, especially her mother Coretta Robinson-Demery and her father Bernard Demery Sr.

Demery said students looking for experiential learning opportunities like hers should take initiative in building relationships with the career center.

“Go to STAR Thursdays at the career center where they help students with their resumes so they can land great internships and jobs,” she said. “You can connect with me and let me help you, too! Stop selling yourself short and start presenting yourself as the educated, intelligent, competent and tenacious person you are. We all have the capability to do anything in life. We just have to learn how to let faith be bigger than our fear.”

For more information on Be the Match, or to join the donor registry, visit [www.BetheMatch.org](http://www.BetheMatch.org). Your donation can save a life!



**CHEYNEY**  
UNIVERSITY  
OF PENNSYLVANIA  
EST. 1837

## Transforms Undergraduates, Provides Opportunities



Providing access to opportunities opens new doors for students to realize their potential pathways. Learning goes well beyond the classroom for Cheyney students. Many find themselves and their passions through the co-curricular and career-building activities available right on campus.

As for Valedictorian Curtis Stockley IV and Salutatorian Jazmin Walker, these opportunities transformed their learning experience and set them on a path to success.

**First-Generation Student, Role Model**  
Prior to his father's passing when Stockley was 12, his father encouraged him to change his family's lives for the better. This motivation instilled a drive in him early on, making it his mission to become a first-generation college student and a role model for his younger siblings and cousins.

Fast forward several years, Stockley graduated as Valedictorian with a 4.0 GPA with a degree in Social Relations and a concentration in American Political Studies. His undergraduate degree is just the beginning of his educational journey. He will attend the graduate school of his choice to pursue a career in human resource management.

"I believe my purpose is to act as a beacon of hope to the youth who come after me. I want to show them they are more than their environment and that their fate is determined by their aspirations and work ethic in the face of hardships," said Stockley.

While attending Cheyney, he was the President of the Student Government Association and President of the Delta Pi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha. He was named the 2022-2023 Mister Blue & White for the Royal Court and was also involved in multiple clubs and organizations, including The Collegiate 100, The Barbershop, The S.E.T. Mentorship Program, The CU Honors Academy, and Social Media Committee.

In addition to furthering his degree and building a career, he plans to keep his sights on entering the world of politics some day with the hopes of changing communities for the better.

**Forever Cheyneymade**  
As a 4.0 GPA Keystone Honors Academy Scholar graduated as Salutatorian with a major in Communications and minor in Psychology, Walker credits Cheyney with her holistic development in transforming her into an exceptional student and an amazing person. Most recently, she was nominated for the

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education 2023 Syed R. Ali-Zaidi Award for Academic Excellence, an award granted to seniors who exhibit excellence in their pursuit of knowledge.

Along with her academic success, she participated in the Life Science and Technology Hub internship program and worked in a marketing role with one of the university's strategic partners, Sure-BioChem Laboratories, LLC, a microbiological and chemical testing lab.

"I would not be the person I am today if it was not for Cheyney," said Walker. "I live by the quote 'Nothing is impossible'. The word itself says, 'I'm possible,' and Cheyney has contributed to the reason that this quote is such an inspirational one to live by."

In addition, she served as a TRiO Scholar, an executive board member of the Student Government Association, a member of the 4.0 Club, and President of the CU Honors Academy Unity Committee. She was also a member of the Women's Basketball team.

She plans to pursue a master's degree in communications which she intends to pivot into a career in the media and productions career field.



# Bluefield State UNIVERSITY

## **BSU Student Patrice Sterling Awarded Apple/ TMCF HBCU Scholars Paid Internship**



Bluefield State student Patrice Sterling has been awarded a prestigious Apple/TMCF HBCU Scholars paid internship.

Patrice Sterling is an exceptional student. The rising junior at Bluefield State University has been selected as one of only 75 Apple/TMCF HBCU scholars (from a field of more than 2000 applicants) to receive a 12-week paid internship with Apple as a System integration engineer for their watch team. This program also included an immersion seminar in April, a mentor and mentee component, and an academic scholarship award.

Sterling has also received additional scholarships for the 2023-14 academic year--the Society of Women Engineers Scholarship and the Student Careers Studio merit-based scholarship, which provides financial assistance for underrepresented students pursuing higher education, and the Gamma Beta Phi Leadership Scholarship based on leadership development and achievement at the BSU chapter or Society's National Executive Committee level.

Based on her academic and professional track record, Patrice was selected in the top 5% of applicants for a paid internship working with software engineers at Microsoft and Cyborg Mobile last summer.

"I am inspired by the challenge to excel in a highly competitive environment and pave the way for other students who share similar dreams," the Bluefield State University Computer Science major explained. "It is particularly rewarding to identify and share scholarship and professional development opportunities that support underrepresented students."

In addition to her academic achievements, Patrice is an active mentor for Passport-to-College (PTC). This non-profit organization aims to bridge the gap between low socioeconomic students in Jamaica and higher education. Through PTC, Sterling demonstrates her commitment to empowering other students from Jamaica to pursue their academic goals by enrolling at Bluefield State University.

Patrice is an active participant in student life at the University as the President of the BSU chapter of Gamma Beta Phi honor society, student representative to the Bluefield State Honors College student representative, and Secretary of the University's International Student Organization. "By fostering a culture of inclusivity and mentorship, I can help other students realize their full potential and achieve their dreams," she explained.

# Former ASU Honors Student Accepted into Graduate Program at Cornell University and a Summer Research Program in Japan



Talyia Griffin ('22), a graduate of Albany State University, has been accepted into the Graduate Program in Biology at Cornell University, which will begin during the fall 2023 semester. At Cornell, she will receive a fellowship that will fund tuition as well as provide housing and a yearly stipend. This summer, before she begins the Cornell program, she will conduct summer research in Japan. Talyia Griffin

The National Science Foundation's International Research Experiences for Students (IRES) in Japan is a nine-week program that focuses on novel behavioral elements in zebrafish and Medaka through the use of CRISPR technology. Participants will be mentored by international scientists, and the program will run from early May to late July.

Talyia said, "I am incredibly honored to attend such a prestigious institution with faculty who are already invested in my career goals. As an IRES Japan student, I am experiencing both a new culture and skill set as the research pertains to molecular biology. While

this is challenging, I am making great strides to refine the techniques and my understanding of them.

I also get to practice a third language. Living in Okazaki has given me the opportunity to use conversational Japanese. While it's not perfect, I am able to move about the city with little issue. So far, this has been a phenomenal experience to be able to be a part of an international program with a great cohort of other exceptional scientists."

While at ASU, Ms. Griffin consistently maintained a 4.0 GPA and routinely conducted summer research at prestigious universities. During the summer of 2021, she participated in the Summer Research Program in Biology (BSG-MSRP-Bio) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). During the program, student participants had the opportunity to conduct research in state-of-the-art laboratories, participate in weekly meetings with MIT faculty, and attend weekly academic seminars.

During the summer of 2022, Talyia was accepted into the Evolutionary

Medicine Program at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). While there, she examined the pertinence of antibiotic development and the intensity behind developing drugs to properly address bacterial evolution. Due to Griffin's participation in the program, she was eligible for the graduate fellowship at UCLA.

Dr. Florence Lyons, Director of the Velma Fudge Grant Honors Program initiated the partnership between UCLA and ASU. She stated, "Talyia is an incredible student and researcher, which is the reason that she was offered tuition-free fellowships at UCLA as well as Cornell University and Purdue University. Cornell University is fortunate to have a student of her caliber enrolled in their graduate program."

Once Talyia receives a doctorate degree from UCLA, in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, she plans to become a microbiologist for the United States Department of Agriculture.





## MVSU Communications & Marketing team win nine CPRAM awards

Mississippi Valley State University's Office of Communications and Marketing team members won nine awards during the College Public Relations Association of Mississippi's (CPRAM's) Awards Ceremony held during the group's annual conference.

Additionally, Maxie has been chosen to serve on the 2023-24 CPRAM Board as a four-year college representative.

The 2023 CPRAM Conference and Awards Ceremony was held for three days in Oxford, Miss. The CPRAM is a consortium of public relations professionals employed at Mississippi's public and private colleges, universities, and affiliated education agencies.

MVSU competed in the senior division, which includes all the state's public and private four-year colleges and universities.

Part of MVSU's Division of University Advancement, MVSU's Communications and Marketing team includes Donell D. Maxie, director; John McCall, senior graphic designer; LaTunya Evans, communications specialist; Justice Williams, associate graphic designer; and Karrington Stockstill, project coordinator/social media manager.

"I am so grateful to work with such a talented, creative team," said Maxie. "In several categories, we went up against bigger teams from larger institutions, and our team shined. I am thrilled to know we are producing top-quality work among our peers at MVSU," he added.

Maxie explained how beneficial the conference is to the communications team in providing vital professional development.

"We were able to share ideas and learn from other public relations professionals from around the state, and we learned a great deal from the conference presenters on several topics that will help our office enhance what we already do to support and promote the university," said Maxie.

Dameon Shaw, Vice President for University Advancement, External Relations, and Information Security, said he's proud of the team for representing the university well.

"The Communications and Marketing team is a hard-working group, and I am extremely proud of the team for their CPRAM wins. They always perform well and do amazing work," said Shaw. "The support they provide to the

institution is essential to the University's success, and I can't thank them enough for all they do for MVSU."

Maxie won first place for his graduation feature story on Wayne Compton in the feature story category. The judges commented on the article: "A great read that is an example of student perseverance and a college that saw his potential and encouraged him to help others through their tragedies."

Maxie also won second place for an article on Trasity Totten being named an MVSU's men's basketball assistant in the sports news story category.

The MVSU graphic designers brought home two awards. McCall won a second-place award for the MVSU stadium banners in the single piece of artwork in sports, and Williams claimed her first CPRAM award with a third-place finish for her MVSU Fitness Class Flyer. It was Williams' first competition since joining the MVSU staff in March 2022.

The team also brought home a second-place finish in the non-sports promo/hype video for their production of the new Esports gaming lab video. Maxie, McCall, Evans, Williams, and Stockstill received an award for their work on the video.

# Black College Today Summer Tour ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY



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# WHAT'S HOT ON THE NET!

**Netflix's** highly anticipated movie, **They Cloned Tyrone**, has us all buzzing! Picture this: a hilarious blend of science fiction, comedy, and mystery, with a star-studded cast including **Academy Award winner Jamie Foxx, Golden Globe winner John Boyega, the talented Teyonah Parris** along with **Kiefer Sutherland and David Alan Grier!** They Cloned Tyrone is director **Juel Taylor's** first feature film. You might know him from his work on movies like **Creed II and Space Jam: A New Legacy.** Check out the trailer if you haven't already and watch They Cloned Tyrone on Netflix starting on July 21!!!

Jeezy recently released his new book titled **"Adversity For Sale: Ya Gotta Believe."** Taking to Instagram, Jeezy recently gave a glimpse of what to expect from this literary creation.

According to Jeezy, this book is a tribute to his loyal supporters, the ones who have been by his side from day one. It's a book filled with untold stories, motivation and personal anecdotes.

Jeezy takes us on a journey through his life, revealing every step, every obstacle, and every triumph that has shaped him into the person he is today. His aim is to inspire and empower all the hustlers, entrepreneurs, and believers out there!!!

We love to see it! **Sean "Diddy" Combs** has fulfilled his commitment to donate a generous sum of \$1 million to **Jackson State University!!!**

Diddy made this announcement while accepting the Lifetime Achievement Award at the **2022 BET Awards.** He declared, "I want to donate \$1 million to **Howard University.** Also, I'm going to drop another \$1 million on **Deion Sanders** and **Jackson State** because we should play for us. Thank you everyone from the bottom of my heart, I love y'all, peace."

President of Jackson State University, **Dr. Elayne Hayes-Anthony,** disclosed the momentous donation during her address at the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees for Institutions of Higher Learning in June. Jackson State University received

\$332,000 in June with additional donations arriving in 2024 and 2025 totaling \$1 million!!!

Congratulations to hip-hop legend **Killer Mike!** Killer Mike has achieved a significant milestone by securing his inaugural **Emmy** award for his exceptional work on his **PBS** show titled **Love & Respect with Killer Mike.** Throughout the series, Mike engaged in captivating interviews with a range of prominent individuals, including **U.S. Senator Raphael Warnock,** comedian **Hannibal Buress** and many others.

As far as new music goes, here's what we're listening to.

**Janelle Monae – The Age of Pleasure**

**Killer Mike – Michael**

**The Weeknd – The Idol, Vol 1**

**Metro Boomin – Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse**

**THAT'S IT FOR THIS EDITION OF WHAT'S HOT ON THE NET!!! BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR MORE CELEBRITY NEWS NEXT TIME IN BCT!!!**

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