UNCF Lighting the Way: Stronger HBCUs, Stronger Students, Stronger Communities
Recognizing the Value of HBCUs

For Black families across our nation with a college graduate, HBCUs have figured prominently in their development. No set of institutions has built a better track record for enabling the upward mobility of Black Americans. They continue to punch above their weight and produce transformational outcomes for their deserving students.

Consider that HBCUs make up just 3% of all 2- and 4-year public and private U.S. higher education institutions, but they educate 10% of all Black college students and 15% of all Black college graduates. These institutions educate almost 20% of all Black science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) degree graduates.

Individuals who graduate from college make nearly an additional million dollars over the course of their careers compared to non-graduates. HBCUs level the playing field for Black Americans.

HBCU alumni often rise to the very top of their fields, opening doors for others to walk through. Notable graduates include:

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.  Morehouse College
Booker T. Washington  Hampton University
Gladys Knight  Shaw University
U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris  Howard University
Ida B. Wells  Rust College
Marian Wright Edelman  Spelman College
Denise Young Smith  Grambling State University

A Guiding Light for the Black Community

Over the past eight decades, UNCF has been a stalwart for the Black community, providing support for promising Black scholars to reach their potential. As the nation’s largest and most effective private scholarship provider to minority group members, second only to the federal government, our work is even more vital in times of crisis—financial downturns, social unrest, uncertainty and disruption.
During the pandemic, all higher-ed institutions were suddenly confronted with the need to offer online and remote learning. This new reality had a more pronounced impact on HBCUs. Just 24% of them had online programs, compared with 54% of non-HBCUs. What’s more, HBCUs lacked the resources and knowledge to quickly ramp up online offerings.

UNCF is providing online learning professional development to 1,700 faculty members at 30 institutions.

Strengthening Our Network of HBCUs

HBCUs have represented a gateway to career advancement and economic mobility. In a changing job market, institutions must expand on their offerings to put their graduates in the best position to succeed. UNCF pursues several initiatives to ensure HBCUs can fulfill their promise to Black students.

“The strategic, deliberate and collaborative advocacy of UNCF led to historic funding levels, making the difference between our surviving and thriving.”

Dr. George T. French Jr. President Clark Atlanta University


These are just a few of the options that can help you contribute to UNCF through planned giving. When you do, you’ll benefit in a variety of tax-advantaged ways. Even more importantly, you’ll make a real difference in the lives of 60,000 students at more than 1,100 colleges and universities across the country.

To make a lasting commitment and to learn more about how to establish your legacy at UNCF, please contact Jason Osborn, Major Gifts Officer, Planned Giving 312.724.7078

UNCF is a proven organization for those who want to help the Black community. Throughout our history, UNCF has partnered with donors to uplift students and HBCUs. Additionally, UNCF knows that the journey for our students does not stop at graduation. Through our Student Professional Development Program we are helping students with career and access opportunities to enter today’s economy stronger and more prepared.

Building the Foundation for a Sustainable Future

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“Thanks to individual and major gifts from people like you, UNCF:

- Has empowered 500,000+ students to graduate from college
- Supports students at 1,000+ colleges and universities across the U.S.
- Awards $72+ million annually in scholarships through 400+ academic programs
- Has a 70% graduation rate for scholarship supported students

That adds up to Better Futures."

Throughout UNCF’s history, philanthropy has enabled the transformation of our HBCUs, their students, and their families and communities. Philanthropy must continue to serve a vital role in this next chapter.

To Our Donors

We thank you for sustaining our students, member HBCUs and UNCF during such an unprecedented time.

To Our Future Donors

We invite you to join us in our generations-long tradition of preparing young Black minds for successful careers and enriched lives. Working towards fortifying our HBCUs and increasing our reserves are critical steps in preparing for continued growth, innovation and progress.

Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, UNCF’s founder, envisioned financially sound HBCUs that would provide equal educational access to Black students. While his legacy endures, UNCF’s next chapter requires bold steps to strengthen our network of HBCUs and ensure these institutions are well positioned to prepare Black students for the challenges of today’s economy.

For more information on how you can help advance the mission and key initiatives of UNCF through a major gift, please contact LaJuana Chenier, Vice President Major Gifts 202.810.0168

LaJuana.Chenier@UNCF.org

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