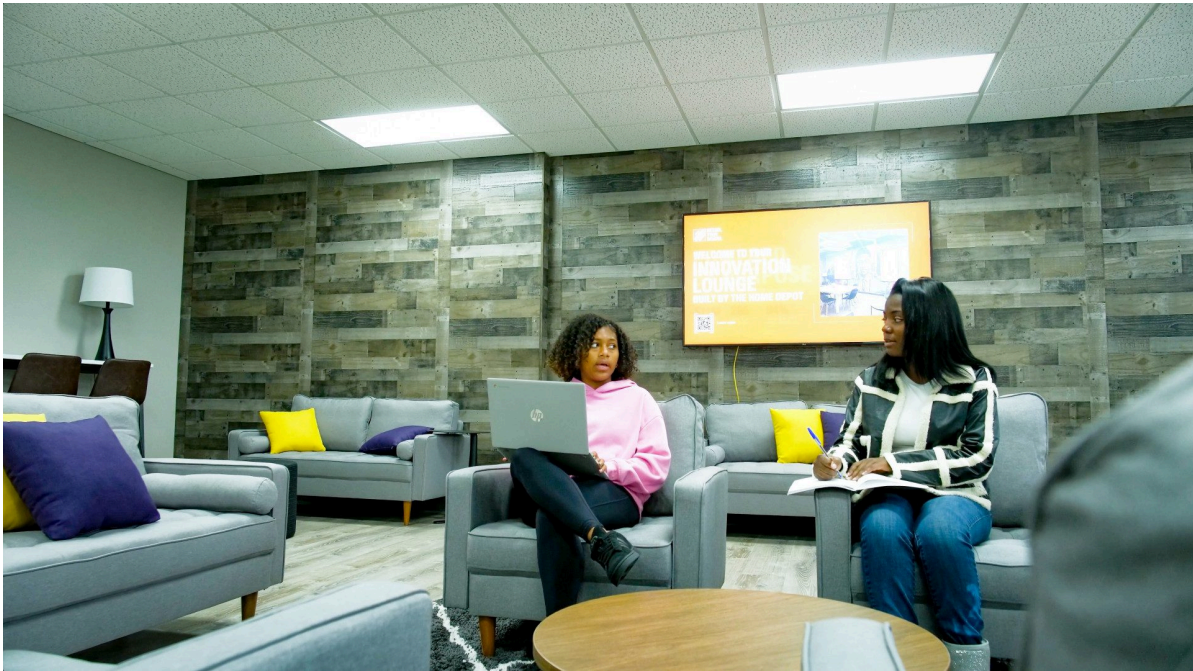


INVEST

Miles College Awarded Home Depot Innovation Lounge Grant



MILES COLLEGE USED THE DONATIONS IT RECEIVED TO SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFORM A SPACE ON CAMPUS INTO A DYNAMIC HUB FOR CREATIVITY, COLLABORATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP. THE INNOVATION LOUNGE FEATURES MODULAR FURNITURE, COLLABORATIVE ZONES AND FLEXIBLE LEARNING AREAS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT THE DIVERSE WAYS STUDENTS ENGAGE, LEARN AND BUILD COMMUNITY. (PHOTO CREDIT: TA'RON WILLIAMS)

U NCF-member institution Miles College based in Fairfield, AL, recently announced its selection as a recipient of The Home Depot's 2025 Retool Your School Innovation Lounge Grant. The Home Depot grant funds an adaptable, tech-forward space designed to foster creativity, collaboration and entrepreneurship among students and faculty.

“We are thrilled to partner with The Home Depot to bring this vision to life,” said Dr. Bobbie Knight, president, Miles College. “This Innovation Lounge will not only enhance our campus infrastructure but also provide our students with the resources and environment necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving professional landscape.”

The Innovation Lounge features modular furniture, collaborative zones and personal pods to accommodate a variety of learning styles and activities. It serves as a knowledge hub, offering workshops, guest lectures and networking events that connect students with industry professionals and alumni.

“The space also supports research initiatives and partnerships with industries and nonprofits, providing students with hands-on experience in solving real-world problems,” said Dr. Erskine “Chuck” Faush, chief innovation and growth officer and vice president of institutional advancement at Miles College.

Dr. Tonya Perry, provost and senior vice president of academic affairs at Miles College, emphasized the importance of diverse learning environments on campus. “All students learn differently—some thrive in quiet, focused pods, while others flourish in collaborative, open settings,” she said. “This Innovation Lounge gives our students the freedom to choose how they engage with their work. We’re grateful to The Home Depot for understanding that a one-size-fits-all model doesn’t serve today’s learners. With this grant, we can create something that works for all.”

Knight, Perry and Faush attended The Home Depot’s awards ceremony in Atlanta, GA, at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. President Knight proudly represented Miles College and accepted the award on behalf of the institution, joined by members of her leadership team. The event welcomed leadership from numerous HBCUs across the country who were also recognized as grant recipients, further emphasizing the nationwide impact of The Home Depot’s investment in excellence.

“As this vision moves forward, Miles College is grateful for the support of its institutional partners,” Knight added.

Investments like The Home Depot’s Innovation Lounge Grant extend far beyond campus improvements—they are catalysts for progress that uplift entire communities. When partners invest in UNCF-member institutions like Miles College, they help expand educational opportunity, strengthen local economies and cultivate future leaders who will drive innovation across Alabama and the nation. Each partnership ensures that historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) remain vital engines of talent and creativity, building a stronger, more inclusive America—one where every student can succeed and shape a better future for us all.