

INNOVATE

Robert Kraft Donates \$1 Million to Support New UNCF Initiative Combating Hate and Bigotry



(L TO R) DR. MICHAEL L. LOMAX, PRESIDENT AND CEO, UNCF; ROBERT KRAFT, CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF THE KRAFT GROUP AND FOUNDER OF THE BLUE SQUARE ALLIANCE AGAINST HATE; MILTON H. JONES, JR., BOARD CHAIR, UNCF; AND DR. GEORGE T. FRENCH, PRESIDENT, CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY.

Robert Kraft, chairman and CEO of the Kraft Group and founder of the Blue Square Alliance Against Hate (formerly the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism), made a \$1 million donation to UNCF in fiscal year 2025 to establish the Tikkun Olam Initiative. The gift supports educational initiatives that promote unity and strengthen partnerships between Black and Jewish students attending historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other colleges and universities.

The Tikkun Olam Initiative is designed to help cultivate the next generation of leaders committed to combating all forms of hate while promoting cross-cultural understanding and student leadership. Kraft announced the donation during a national meeting of UNCF's Board of Directors in 2024, marking a highlight as UNCF launched its yearlong 80th anniversary celebration.

“We are incredibly grateful for Robert Kraft’s extraordinary generosity and his commitment to supporting UNCF’s Tikkun Olam Initiative, which promotes unity and respect among students from diverse backgrounds,” said UNCF Board Chair Milton H. Jones Jr. “This \$1 million donation will have a profound impact on our efforts to create a more inclusive society. It strengthens our ability to combat hate while inspiring others to join the fight.”

Dr. Michael L. Lomax, UNCF president and CEO, also expressed appreciation for Kraft’s leadership and partnership. “We are immensely grateful to Robert Kraft for his unwavering support of UNCF and his commitment to combating hate,” Lomax said. “This donation enables us to develop innovative programs and resources that empower students to serve as agents of change in their communities. Together, we can work toward a future rooted in mutual respect, understanding and love.”

In fiscal year 2025, UNCF convened a series of Tikkun Olam Initiative Unity Dinners to foster connection and understanding between Black and Jewish communities. Created in partnership with the Blue Square Alliance Against Hate and Hillel International, the dinners seek to rebuild historic bonds between the two communities while exploring their distinct experiences. The gatherings bring together Black and Jewish students to engage in dialogue, share personal perspectives, address social challenges and build meaningful relationships centered on a more just and inclusive future.

The Unity Dinner series launched Oct. 21, 2024, in Atlanta, with more than 80 students representing UNCF-member institutions Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College and Spelman College, along with Agnes Scott College, Emory University, Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University and Morris Brown College. Additional dinners were held at George Washington University in Washington, DC, with 82 students in attendance, and at Rice University in Houston, TX, with 75 students participating.

On Feb. 7, 2025, UNCF, the Blue Square Alliance Against Hate and Hillel International hosted the first Unity Summit during Super Bowl LIX at Xavier University of Louisiana. The summit convened more than 100 Black and

Jewish student-athletes from Dillard University, Loyola University New Orleans, Louisiana State University, Southern University, the University of New Orleans, Tulane University and Xavier University of Louisiana.

The summit featured panel discussions with prominent sports figures, including quarterback Jake Retzlaff of Brigham Young University, running back Leonard Fournette of the Buffalo Bills, placekicker Greg Joseph of the New York Jets and former basketball player and coach Nancy Lieberman of the WNBA and NBA. The program also included a conversation between Kraft and musician and activist Meek Mill.

During the summit, Kraft reaffirmed his commitment to fostering a society free from hate and discrimination. “I am honored to support UNCF in its mission to combat hate and promote unity,” Kraft said. “By investing in education and awareness, we can empower individuals to stand up against hate and help create a more inclusive future for all.”

Through the Tikkun Olam Initiative, UNCF is advancing its enduring mission to expand opportunity, strengthen understanding and affirm the shared humanity of all people—work that reflects its legacy and belief that “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.”[®] By confronting hate at its roots and empowering students to lead with empathy, education and purpose, this initiative helps build a stronger, more inclusive nation—one where the futures of Black students, Jewish students and all Americans are bettered, protected, valued and free to thrive.