

**INSPIRE**

# UNCF Student Leadership Conference: Donor Support Enables Students to Lead and Succeed



THE UNCF STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IS AN IMMERSIVE, HIGH-IMPACT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE DESIGNED TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE. RISING JUNIORS, SENIORS AND ENTRY-LEVEL HIRES FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES NATIONWIDE, INCLUDING HBCUS, GAINED THE SKILLS, CONFIDENCE AND CAREER READINESS NEEDED TO EXCEL IN THEIR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS AND EARLY CAREERS THROUGH INTENSIVE SIMULATIONS AND COACHING FROM SENIOR BUSINESS AND NONPROFIT LEADERS.

**W** hat does it take for a student to thrive in today's competitive economy? Experience and opportunity. Thanks to UNCF's generous donors and corporate partners, hundreds of talented students from across the nation gained both at the 14th annual UNCF Student Leadership Conference

(SLC). Held May 29 through June 1, 2024, in Arlington, VA, and hosted by Wells Fargo, this multiday event brought together nearly 1,330 undergraduate scholars for a transformative experience designed to prepare them for success in internships and beyond.

Through the support of sponsors who integrate internships into their scholarship programs, students are gaining hands-on experience that bridges the gap between classroom learning and career readiness.

“Wells Fargo is excited to be involved again with the UNCF Student Leadership Conference,” said Shantae Joseph, head of employee engagement and strategic enablement, Wells Fargo. “Our leaders believe in investing in the lives of talented students with our time, talent and treasure, and we look forward to positively impacting each one of them during this great conference.”

The conference featured dynamic workshops, keynote addresses and coaching sessions led by top executives from corporate and nonprofit sectors. Students honed essential workplace skills—communication, teamwork, leadership and professionalism—while building confidence as emerging leaders in industries such as business, computer science, education, engineering, finance, healthcare and technology.



THROUGH UNCF'S PARTNERSHIP WITH MACY'S, SELECTED STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN A PERSONALIZED STYLING EXPERIENCE DURING THE 14TH ANNUAL UNCF STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE FROM MAY 29-JUNE 1, 2024. GUIDED BY PROFESSIONAL STYLISTS, STUDENTS CURATED POLISHED, WORKPLACE-READY LOOKS—BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND SHARPENING THEIR PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE AS THEY PREPARED FOR THEIR SUMMER INTERNSHIPS.

**“Recent data confirms that more than half of undergraduate students in the United States are considered first-generation college students—and that number rises to 70% at HBCUs,” said Taliah Givens, senior director, student professional development programs, UNCF. “That means many of these students are also the first in their families to transition into careers requiring a college degree. It’s our priority, alongside our corporate partners, to provide SLC as a launching pad—equipping talented, underrepresented students with real tools for transformational internships that lead to full-time positions.”**

Each year, donor contributions for the student leadership program supports students in being able to attend, network with peers and leaders, connect with impactful internships and receive mentorship. The SLC ensures they not only earn degrees, but also enter the workforce prepared to lead with purpose and professionalism.

Together, through investment in experiences like SLC, UNCF and its supporters are creating a future where opportunity is accessible to all. Because when donors open doors for students, they open doors to better futures for us all.