



Diversity is Good for Business

Across corporate America, recruiting, recognizing, and rewarding diverse talent and the institutions that educate them is now a requisite, not an option, for competitiveness, innovation, and profitability.¹



Harnessing the Power of HBCUs

HBCUs provide great value to their students, while producing graduates that can bring extraordinary value to employers across corporate America.

HBCUs account for only 3% of America's colleges and universities yet produce 17% of all Black graduates and 25% of Black graduates in STEM fields.²

The Opportunity – What HBCUs Need from You

HBCUs are Community Anchoring Institutions

While there are opportunities for corporations to foster relationships with HBCUs as a talent pipeline, for HBCUs to flourish, engagement should be more than about hiring talent. It's an investment in the community. In terms of economic value, they contribute approximately \$15 billion annually in GDP, while generating nearly 135,000 jobs for their local and regional economies.²



Obstacles to Success

As shown above with graduation rates, HBCUs have continually overperformed in developing talent despite being extremely under-funded and under-resourced as you will see below.

46%

HBCU building space that needs to be replaced³

2X

Average debt for Black students after 4 years of college⁴

1/8

The average HBCU endowment is one-eighth that of the average Predominantly White Institution (PWI).⁵

Ways to Engage

Invest



When the business community supports the sustainability of HBCs, the benefits can extend within the community.

Ex. Providing support such as technology, facilities, etc., can help enable HBCUs to better serve students and communities



Empower



Building a robust and diverse talent pipeline can be helpful for businesses, HBCUs and their graduates and the community

Ex. Contributing to the development of relevant curriculum (e.g., financial literacy) to help program participants and deepen talent pipelines.



Advocate



HBCUs could benefit from support from corporate America to help reduce longstanding inequities (e.g., average debt, lower endowments, etc.)

Ex. Working with organizations and non-profits that advocate and help support HBCUs such as: Thurgood Marshall College Fund, United Negro College Fund, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, etc.



Questions for CEOARE HBCU Engagement Strategies

As you develop and evolve your HBCU engagement strategy, consider the following questions as a guide.

What are the specific goals and objectives of engaging with HBCUs?

What metrics and benchmarks can be established to measure the success and impact of the HBCU engagement strategies?

How does your organization foster an environment of equity and inclusion for diverse staff?

How can your organization effectively align your support with the specific needs and priorities of HBCUs in a way that cultivates long-term success?

What existing resources, programs, or initiatives can be leveraged to support HBCU engagement?

How can your organization contribute to the success and professional development of HBCU students?

What opportunities exist for your organization to support entrepreneurship and innovation within the HBCU community?

How can your organization engage with HBCU alumni networks and associations? (e.g. ERGs, fraternities and sororities, etc.)

How can your organization work with HBCU faculty and administrators to develop curriculum and research opportunities?

How can your organization collaborate with other organizations to advance the impact of HBCU engagement efforts?

How is your organization effectively communicating its commitment to HBCUs and the broader community?

How can your organization continuously adapt and improve its HBCU engagement strategies based on feedback and evaluation?

References

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2. United Negro College Fund (UNCF) *“HBCUs Make America Strong”* <https://uncf.org/news/hbcus-make-america-strong>
3. United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), *“Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Action Needed to Improve Participation in Education’s HBCU Capital Financing Program”*, [gao.gov](https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-18-455), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-18-455>.
4. United Negro College Fund (UNCF) *“Fewer Resources, More Debt: Loan Debt Burdens Students at HBCUs”* <https://uncf.org/pages/infographic-fewer-resources-more-debt-loan-debt-burdens-students-at-hbcus>
5. TMCF, *“Historically Black Colleges and Universities”* <https://www.tmc.org/about-us/member-schools/about-hbcus/>



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