

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Derrick Bryan Charts a Course in Higher Ed. . . . 3
- ARISE Helps Student-Athletes With STEM . . . . 5
- Fisk Awarded \$750,000 Grant. . . . . 6
- Notable STEM Programs at the Top 10 HBCUs . . . . . 9
- Briefs: News You Can Use. . . . . 16

*and more*

# STEMUS

HBCU STEM UNDERGRADUATE SUCCESS RESEARCH CENTER

SPRING 2022 | ISSUE 8

Funded by NSF HBCU-UP

TRIANNUAL NEWSLETTER

# GOOGLE.ORG DONATES \$1 MILLION TO CODEHOUSE



The nonprofit CodeHouse, founded by two Morehouse Men and based in Atlanta, has received \$1 million in funding from the charitable arm of Google, Google.org, to continue its mission to combat the diversity gap in technology.

CodeHouse officials are using the donation to grow the mentorship and scholarship program, expanding its offerings to students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in Washington, D.C., and North Carolina over the next two years. Howard University in Washington, D.C., and North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, N.C., will soon benefit from CodeHouse leaders' expertise.

Morehouse College alumni Ernest Holmes and Tavis Thompson—current employees of Google and Microsoft—founded the nonprofit in 2019 to encourage minority students to pursue careers in STEM. “As a Morehouse College graduate and current Google software engineer, securing this funding from Google.org means the world,” said Holmes, president of CodeHouse. “Not only does this grant help CodeHouse support even more HBCU students throughout their tech journeys, but it also reaffirms that my employer (Google) is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in the industry.

“To find synergies like these between your personal and professional endeavors is truly what it’s all about.”

YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki announced the \$1-million donation via a virtual fireside chat with Holmes and HBCU students. “We are very excited with all the work that you are doing,” Wojcicki told Holmes. “It’s been so impressive to see how you’ve started this organization, been an entrepreneur, and made a difference.”



Morehouse Men Ernest Holmes (right) and Tavis Thompson founded CodeHouse in 2019 to encourage minority students to pursue careers in STEM.

In April 2019, Holmes and Thompson invited more than 200 students from urban middle and high schools in Atlanta to participate in what they called the “CodeHouse Day of Code” at Morehouse. The one-day conference featured a tech expo, a job fair showcasing STEM careers, and motivational sessions led by Black engineers. In addition, representatives from the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) shared information on STEM initiatives and college scholarships.

That first campus CodeHouse day grew into a four-year program designed to mentor, prepare, and invest in Black, Latinx, and Native America students headed for careers in the tech industry. Scholars receive up to \$20,000 in academic scholarships and are eligible for collegiate mentorship from participating HBCUs and industry mentorship from leading tech companies such as Google, Microsoft, and PayPal, the program’s founding partner. Students also participate in a four-week, paid Summer Bridge Program

## Google.org donates \$1 million to CodeHouse... cont'd



at Morehouse to help improve their technical and leadership skills.

“Since CodeHouse’s founding, we’ve been able to reach thousands of students of color in the Atlanta area and equip them with the tools they need to successfully pursue careers in tech,” said

Holmes. “With this grant from Google.org, we’re able to take our efforts to the next level and impact the lives of thousands more.”

Matriculating high school seniors who will be attending Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, or Spelman College in Fall 2022 are eligible to apply to CodeHouse through the CodeHouse website: [www.thecodehouse.org](http://www.thecodehouse.org). ■



Morehouse College President David Thomas is presented with his own CodeHouse t-shirt in 2019.



## CodeHouse Expands to HBCUs in Washington, D.C., and North Carolina

The CodeHouse Scholars Initiative (CHSI), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on tackling the diversity gap in the tech industry, has expanded its reach to students outside of the Atlanta University Center (AUC). Incoming freshmen at Howard University and North Carolina A&T State University can now apply to join students planning to attend Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, and Spelman College when applying for the prestigious mentorship and scholarship program.

“At CodeHouse, we want every student out there—regardless of their race, ethnicity, background, or financial situation—to know that there’s a seat at the table for them in tech,” said Jaycee Holmes, CodeHouse director of curriculum and instruction. “Our inaugural class of CodeHouse Scholars continue to make us proud, and we couldn’t be more excited to welcome our second cohort into the fold as we look to prepare the next generation of tech leaders for their careers.”

Incoming freshmen planning to attend Howard University, North Carolina A&T State University, Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, and Spelman College are invited to apply for the CodeHouse Scholars Initiative. To learn more about eligibility requirements and access the full application, click [here](#).



### Applicant Eligibility Requirements

1. Enrolled and matriculating high school senior scheduled to graduate in the spring of 2022.
2. Be enrolled for the first time at one of the five (5) participating HBCUs: Clark Atlanta University, Howard University, Morehouse College, North Carolina A&T State University, or Spelman College.
3. Have demonstrated financial and unmet financial need, as measured by the student’s college or university.
4. Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.2 on an unweighted 4.0 scale or equivalent.
5. Show evidence of readiness for and commitment to pursue a major in a tech-related field, including computer science/engineering, information sciences, engineering (industrial, mechanical, or electrical), mathematics, human-computer interaction, graphic or UX/UI design.
6. Show evidence of academic ambition, leadership, service, and interest in the technology field.
7. Identify as Black/African American, Latinx or Native American.

# DERRICK BRYAN

## CHARTS A COURSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

Derrick M. Bryan, Ph.D., was content in his first higher ed position as a researcher and assistant professor in the Department of Gender and Race Studies at the University of Alabama. But it took a powerful E-4 tornado slamming into Tuscaloosa on April 27, 2011, to wake him up to the fact that he could be happier.

Bryan talks about his journey back to Morehouse College—where he'd earned his undergraduate degree in sociology—and his current position as executive director of the HBCU STEM-US Research Center.

### Where did you grow up?

"Syracuse, N.Y. I'm a central New Yorker, hard core. But I spent my summers in the South. My mother was from Chipley, Florida, outside Dothan, Alabama."

### You were a first-generation college student. Who was instrumental in inspiring you to attend college?

"My mom. She praised me for enjoying learning. My peers didn't understand that. To them, you graduated from high school, there was a big celebration, and that was it. You got a job. But my mom was a heavy presence in our schooling. She knew all the teachers, and she always made time for parent-teacher conferences. She would say, 'I want to look at your report cards.' Once, I got a B- and a C in something, and on the way home I tried to change the grades. My mom made me apologize. She said, 'This is something that's valuable and you're not treating it like that.'"

### Where did you go to undergraduate school?

"Morehouse College. I could have gone to Syracuse tuition-free, but I just didn't want to stay in Syracuse. I never felt like I belonged there. I had a lot of friends in that system, but I liked the South and I wanted to go away. My momma told me, 'You're only a flight away. I want you to go out and explore things.'"

"I had been looking at the SUNY schools, and then I went to the HBCU websites, and there were people who not only looked like me but also looked like things I valued. I studied the Morehouse website and printed it out. Someone helped me do some research, and a couple months later they were coming to a high school in the city. So, I went and met some people who'd gone there."



Late in the afternoon of April 27, 2011, a mile-wide, monster EF-4 tornado roared through the cities of Tuscaloosa and Birmingham, Ala. More than 1,200 people were injured, 64 people died just in Tuscaloosa, and the horrific Super Outbreak storm went down in history as one of the worst ever recorded. Derrick Bryan lost most of his home in that tornado but gained new direction for his life.

See video of the deadly Tuscaloosa tornado [here](#).



## Derrick Bryan... cont'd

### You're a member of the Morehouse Class of 2004. What did you study at Morehouse?

"I was a sociology major and biology minor. I wanted to do research and thought that was more science and medical, but sophomore year I realized it was more along the lines of sociology and epidemiology."

### Why did you decide to go to The Ohio State University for master's and doctoral degrees in sociology?

"I got into Ohio University and the University of Michigan; they're in the top 10 schools for sociology. At Michigan, I did a summer program. Then, I chose Ohio State and got into the role of sociology in health, medicine, culture, and education."

### From 2010 to 2012, you were an assistant professor at the University of Alabama, in Gender and Race Studies. Then you decided to look for another job. How did that evolve?

"Professionally, I was doing great; personally, not so much. I was 25 and most people my age were grad students. Then the end of my first year there, in the spring of 2011, an EF-4 tornado took half my house. I saw a tornado—huge!—appear on one side of a building and reappear on the other."

"I was at the university, the sirens were going off, and no one moved. It was a sunny day, but they had closed the campus just in case. I pulled into a restaurant, and that's when it hit. There were eight of us in this bathroom, holding on to the pipes. Later, I thought, 'I can deal with all kinds of weather, but I can't do that.'"

### What happened after the tornado?

"The next day going home I drove through so much destruction that it took a lot out of me. I had a sense of calm, and I thought, 'I survived!' But I realized if I wasn't happy there, personally, it wasn't going to work."

"I spent the next year looking for jobs. I got several offers—from Columbia, the University of Texas, the University of North, Texas, and NYU. A former professor encouraged me to apply at Morehouse, and I thought I'd go through the process at Morehouse (they tend to start the process later than most). So, toward the end of hiring season. I came up to Atlanta to talk and teach a class. I left, and before I got home the provost had offered me the position."

### Ultimately, why did you decide to join the Morehouse faculty?

"Because there were professors there who had mentored me... and because there's just something about Morehouse."

### You were in the provost's office at Morehouse first, while working as an associate professor in sociology, and then in the Frederick Douglass Academic Success Center. How did you become executive director of the HBCU STEM-US Research Center?

"I took over the Douglass Center, and we put some goals in place and hired some people to make it a work-in-progress. I was still the director there when Curg (Lycurgus Muldrow, past executive director of the HBCU STEM-US Research Center) contacted me. I'd known him and reached out to him for a few grants before."

"The provost and President (David) Thomas reached out to me, too, and I told them I'd sit in on a few (Center) meetings. I did that in November/December/early January, and then I requested waiting till July 30, 2021, to come onboard."



"The end goal for me is to be a provost ... I want to have influence and help execute the academic plan."

### What changes have been made in sociology since you've been at Morehouse?

"We're taking the major to where it is viable for our students. Of course, we'll learn about Karl Marx, but how does that information apply to them? We've reshaped the department. We went from being the second biggest graduated major to the biggest. (Normally, it's business or biology.)"

"We've able to teach students about the value of sociology to medicine—like bedside manner and cultural relativity. We have a lot of people who get into tech media, law school, or teaching. Others get their MBAs and go into business consulting."

### How is your work at the HBCU STEM-US Research Center going?

"I want to make sure that everything promised in the first two years is delivered. What have we over-promised and underdelivered on? I'm working to get a good bearing on where we are."

"I'm getting the foundation set and making any changes we need—reinvesting in things we promised. There will also be a site visit to make sure everything is up to expectations."

## Derrick Bryan... cont'd

### What goals do you have for your career?

"The end goal for me is to be a provost. I want to have the influence, execute the plan. It's being hands-on with things—seeing the evolution of something. Being able to note what it was prior to you joining."

"I'm very organized in terms of my schedule, and I'm a people person; I have a horizontal leadership style. I keep people well-informed and updated. My mother raised me to be that way."

### How do you relax?

"My mom taught me the value of hard work but also hard rest. Now I realize that when I leave here, work stays here."

### What do you see in your future?

"Since I've been at Morehouse, I've had other job offers but I've turned them down. Each time I sit down and think about it, but I'm not done here yet. Morehouse is allowing me to have so many things, and I am getting administrative experience on different levels. I've dealt with different adversities, and it's empowered me."

### What's something you're very proud of in your life?

"The influence that I have on students. That's my legacy." ■

## SAVE THE DATE

2022  
Joint Convening of the  
HBCU STEM-US RESEARCH  
CENTER & HBCU-CEEQA  
CONFERENCE

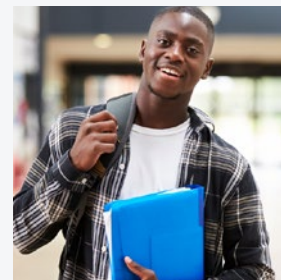
JULY 13-15

Visit [stemuscenter.org](http://stemuscenter.org) for more information.



## NCAA, athLEDA Helping Student-Athletes Interested in STEM

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has created the virtual learning platform ARISE to ensure that athletes at HBCUs are getting the education they need to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math. The innovative e-learning program was developed in conjunction with athLEDA, a company helping athletes transition from college to professional careers.



ARISE (Authentic Resilient Innovative in STEM Excellence) uses eight interactive modules—accessible via a computer or cellphone—to help athletes with personal growth while they learn more about potential careers in STEM. In addition to STEM basics, topics include leadership, personal branding, time management, perseverance, and online social platform development.

Each athlete is matched with a mentor who is a STEM industry professional. Those mentors give the athletes one-on-one insight about what to expect from careers in STEM.

"STEM is an industry that lacks a diverse workforce, and ARISE is a unique strategy to provide HBCU student-athletes with an opportunity to learn more about STEM through industry mentors," said Felicia Martin, interim senior vice president for NCAA inclusion, education, and community engagement. "The partnership with athLEDA is an excellent example of niche, solution-based leadership development programming."

ARISE is being offered this spring semester to 35 students at Florida A&M, Claflin University, and Grambling University. To kick off the initiative, NCAA leadership development staff and athLEDA representatives traveled to each of the three HBCU campuses to meet the student-athletes and introduce the program and career mentors.

The inaugural ARISE program runs for 13 weeks through early May.



# FISK AWARDED \$750,000 GRANT FOR STEM PROGRAM IN ROCKETRY, ELECTRONICS, ENGAGEMENT, AND CODING



“It’s exciting to think that a student who was influenced by our program might serve on a mission in space one day!”

Bryan Kent Wallace, Ed.D., an assistant professor of physics and dean of graduate studies at Fisk University, has been awarded a highly competitive Institutional Grant of \$750,000 over three years for the Fisk program STEM-through Rocketry, Electronics, Engagement, and Coding (STEM-TREEC). The grant, from the U.S. Department of Education’s Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (MSEIP), is designed to increase the retention of STEM majors of color and women in physics, mathematics, chemistry, computer science, and engineering.



Bryan Kent Wallace, Ed.D.

“We are so excited about this huge opportunity provided to us by the Department of Education,” said Wallace, who has dedicated his career to the upward mobility of underserved populations in math intensive subject matter and STEM-related curricula. “This will expand Fisk’s efforts in broadening the participation of underrepresented minorities and women in science and engineering.

“It’s exciting to think that a student who was influenced by our program might serve on a mission in space one day!”

Wallace also serves as the principal Investigator for Fisk University’s rocket science program.

Researchers are now in the implementation phase of the grant, working to enhance the hands-on laboratory experiences of students in:

**General physics courses.**

“Since all STEM majors take at least one semester of physics, we get the largest impact engaging students who pass through our physics lectures and laboratories,” Wallace said. “Hence, students are now utilizing the latest technology in data acquisition for their physics experiments.”

**100-level and upper-level applied science and applied physics courses now being developed.**

Students who engage in research have higher retention rates than students who do not engage in research, scientists believe, so Fisk scholars will use course-based research classes to engage students in robotics, rocketry, unmanned aerial vehicles, and high-altitude balloons.

“We expect that the 100-level applied science classes might recruit some students who have not declared a major because they are on the fence about taking on majors they perceive to be out of their capabilities,” Wallace said. “The whole idea is for students to be learning new and exciting things in such a way they ‘forget’ that it’s hard.”

**Laboratories, working as assistants/peer mentors.**

Students will serve as laboratory assistants/peer mentors to expose them to research projects and, through peer academic mentoring, to teach classmates the concepts they’ve learned.

“This grant is centered on the theoretical framework that students who persist in STEM have a strong sense of self-concept and scientific identity,” Wallace explained. “In other words, they can see themselves as future scientists and engineers.

“One of the strongest factors in developing scientific identity is being engaged by experts who share similar cultural, ethnic, and gender backgrounds and have positive classroom and laboratory experiences in the process. Well, those are things Fisk can provide in substantive ways.”

The \$750,000 grant will support the work of 15 to 16 student scholars per year for three years as laboratory assistants and summer interns.

The program will be led by: Wallace, Fisk’s director of physics laboratories and dean of graduate studies, as the principal investigator; Sajid Hussain, Ph.D., the senior faculty member, who is also Fisk’s director of sponsored research and programs, as well as discipline coordinator in data science; and program coordinator Akira Ueda, Ph.D., a Fisk research assistant professor in physics. ■

Researchers are now in the implementation phase of the grant, working to enhance the hands-on laboratory experiences of students.



# JAYLEN LOWE, MOREHOUSE '21, HEADS TO UCLA TO PURSUE DOCTORAL WORK IN URBAN SCHOOLING

Jaylen Lowe, a psychology major and 2021 graduate of Morehouse College, will head to Los Angeles soon to pursue a doctorate in urban schooling at UCLA (the University of California, Los Angeles). Before leaving for the West Coast, though, the 22-year-old, accomplished, first-generation scholar is completing post-baccalaureate work with the HBCU STEM-US Research Center, based at Morehouse in Atlanta.

“Jaylen is truly a remarkable researcher and an exceptional student,” said Brittany Chambers, an education researcher at the HBCU

STEM-US Research Center. “He came into the Center not really knowing what he wanted to do after he graduated from Morehouse. However, after some intense mentoring and hands-on experiences, he is headed to UCLA to get his Ph.D. in urban schooling this fall.

“We are all extremely proud of him,” she added. “He’s proof of the impactful work we do at the STEM-US Research Center.”

Lowe reflected on his work with the Center, STEM academics, and career from his home in Eden, N.C., near Greensboro.

**UCLA**  
BOUND



## You hold a bachelor's degree in psychology from Morehouse College. How will you use your degree?

“I hope to continue to build on the knowledge gained from my undergraduate experiences to further my career in education and research. Long-term, I plan to start a nonprofit organization that works to grant disadvantaged communities enhanced STEM education experiences and expose Black students to academic and career opportunities within STEM fields.”

## At first, you were a biology student at Morehouse. Why did you change your major to psychology?

“I entered Morehouse as a biology major with transfer credits from my high school’s early college program. I enrolled in an upper-level course with hopes of graduating early but ended up struggling the whole semester. I had never gotten a C before, but then I got a D in cell biology, lost my academic scholarship, and almost had to drop out. It broke my world.

“After I changed my major to psychology, though, everything shifted for me. I discovered I wasn’t as passionate about biology as I thought I was, and I found something I was good at, and passionate about. Once I switched to psychology, I also learned more about myself and people in my community. Everything aligned.”

## You were an Oprah Scholar at Morehouse. Tell us about that.

“Becoming an Oprah Scholar was a distinct honor and enhanced my Morehouse journey tremendously. The Oprah Winfrey Scholars program (OWSP) provided enriched leadership development opportunities and allowed me to serve in both the collegiate and local communities. I had the opportunity to meet so many great people, mentor local high school students, serve on the advisory board, enhance my community engagement skills, and help start the senior OWSP social justice ‘More Conversations’ podcast. I am forever grateful for the leadership in the program, for all that they do. I cannot wait to pay it forward! (I’d like to give thanks to Ms. Jeanine White at Morehouse who was the program assistant at the time she recommended me to the program. Without her this opportunity would not have been possible.)”

## What was it like meeting Oprah Winfrey?

“It was an unbelievable experience—life-changing to say the least. Oprah Scholars had the opportunity to spend the day with her and then attend a campus-wide panel discussion. While sitting in front of her, I constantly kept thinking to myself, ‘How did a small-town guy like me get the opportunity to sit in a room with Oprah?’ She was so nice, encouraging, and nurturing. She constantly referred to the Oprah Scholars as her sons.”

## Jaylen Lowe... cont'd

### Oprah gave her scholars some advice about what to do when they hit their low points in life. What was that?

"In short, she gave us advice about life experiences. She said that it's important to ask, while at your lowest point, 'Why is this experience here, what is it teaching me'... and if you don't get the answers, to ask, 'What am not getting?' She believes that experiences happen for us and not to us. Then, she goes into prayer/meditation.

"Through her spirituality, Oprah shared the importance of listening to life's whispers. She said that life will always try to send you messages through signs and whispers, and if you don't pay attention, over time they grow louder and stronger. Eventually, if they go unnoticed, these develop into problems, crises, and disasters.

"Oprah also shared Maya Angelou's greatest teaching to her: 'When people show you who they are... believe them the first time.' Her insight was extremely helpful to the circumstance I was in that day on Oct. 7, 2019—the day of Oprah's visit to Morehouse—and it better positioned me to make some personal decisions in my life."

### In the summer of 2021, you did some work at UCLA. What was that?

"I participated in the eight-week Summer Training for Excellence in Education Research (STEER) program at UCLA, sponsored by the UC-HBCU Initiative—an initiative that seeks to increase the number of HBCU graduates completing UCLA doctoral programs. During this program, I conducted and presented an independent research project on high school leadership."

### In UCLA's Urban Schooling graduate division, students explore phenomena that impact education in urban settings. What do you hope to get out of that program?

"I aim to enact systematic change that improves the educational outcomes of Black students. This program will provide knowledge and training that allows me to



Jaylen Lowe, an Oprah Winfrey Scholar, met Oprah at Morehouse when she visited the campus on Oct. 7, 2019.

engage in the study and practice of urban school reform. Pursuing a Ph.D. will prepare me to be a change agent in the world and make a difference in the lives of others."

### "While a senior at Morehouse, you began working for the HBCU STEM-US Research Center as a PEER Fellow (Program for Educating Emerging Researchers). What have you been doing for the Center?"

"I originally came into the Center in November of 2020 as an undergraduate researcher. Currently, I work in the Center as a post-bacc for Scientific Literacy. I'm responsible for conducting literature reviews, managing/analyzing quantitative data, providing support for qualitative data analysis when needed, interpreting data/presenting findings, and assisting in writing and editing materials for publications."

### How has the HBCU STEM-US Research Center impacted you?

"I'd like to give a special shoutout to Dr. Lycurgus Muldrow and Dr. Brittany Chambers, who both inspired me to go on to graduate school and work toward my goals. I was worried that if I didn't go on to school now—while I'm still in this scholar mindset—I wouldn't do it. Receiving mentorship from professionals who look like me allowed me to visualize a future in the field for myself. Representation matters.

"Also, learning more about Scientific Literacy and our team's efforts to help students through the STEM pipeline has also inspired me to continue to do the work and share my story."

### How has attending an HBCU helped you to achieve your goals?

"Attending an HBCU offered me a challenging academic experience, a supportive community, and a way to embrace my culture, and be unapologetically Black. After going through New Student Orientation (NSO) Week as a Morehouse freshman, I felt really welcomed into the community. People treated me as their own family; it felt so right and natural to me. That experience alone inspired me to become a leader. I wanted to do the same for the younger men of Morehouse who came after me.

"So, I became an NSO leader for two years and got involved with all the shows and the preparatory work. I got the opportunity to continue Morehouse traditions, build bonds with other students, and develop into the leader I wanted to be. And that enriching experience encouraged me to tap into my own potential and strive toward my goals."

### How has Morehouse impacted you?

"Morehouse changed my life! Mother Morehouse provided a nurturing environment that allowed me to grow into the man that I am today. Since the first time I walked on the historic bricks of the Century Campus, I always felt a profound sense of community and a liberating sense of possibility. Morehouse has prepared me to lead a life of leadership and service. Understanding the legacy of men who walked on the Morehouse campus... I have no other choice but carve out a legacy for myself."

### What advice would you give to a student planning to declare a STEM major?

"I'd say to invest in your spiritual life and believe in yourself—you are worthy. You have the power within to create your reality. Stay positive, because positive thinking is the root of a positive lifestyle.

"And remember that progress isn't always linear. Reset, readjust, restart, and refocus, as many times as you have to. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and never give up!" ■

U.S. News & World Report has named its Top 10 HBCUs for 2022. Following is a look at the Top 10 colleges and universities and how they are laying claim to some of the best HBCU STEM programs in the country.

# U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKS TOP 10 HBCUs

## BEST COLLEGES

& WORLD REPORT  
**U.S. News**  
RANKINGS

Spelman College topped the list of Top 10 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in U.S. News & World Report's 2022 edition. To qualify for the list, a school had to be currently designated by the U.S. Department of Education as an HBCU, be an undergraduate, baccalaureate-granting institution that enrolls primarily first-year, first-time students, and be a school that is part of the overall U.S. News & World Report 2022 Best Colleges rankings. (HBCUs were compared only with one another for these rankings.)

### 1 Spelman College

Spelman College, in Atlanta, boasts the Center of Excellence for Minority Women in STEM, designed to nurture students' critical thinking about issues such as human rights, healthcare, and leadership development.

The center expands on Spelman's strategies to educate Black women in STEM, and "strengthens and deepens the knowledge and experiences afforded to our students and faculty through partnerships with industry, academia and governmental agencies," college officials say. A Women's Research and Resource Center—the first center of its kind on a Black college campus devoted to a women's studies curriculum—is also located at Spelman. Notable Spelman alumni include Alice Walker, Marian Wright Edelman, and Stacey Abrams.



HBCUBUZZ.COM

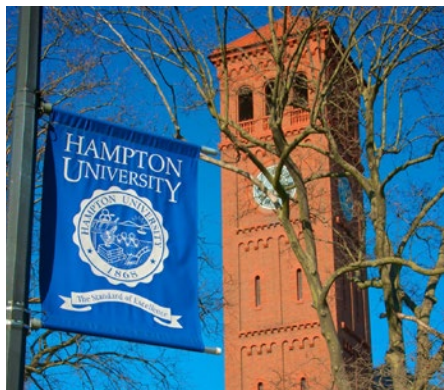
### 2 Howard University

Howard University, located in the heart of the District of Columbia, is among the highest producers of the nation's Black professionals in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, engineering, nursing, architecture, religion, law, music, social work, and education. The campus is home to the award-winning Karsh STEM Scholars Program, which each year attracts hundreds of competitive high school students interested in beginning their STEM careers. Notable Howard alumni include former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, Andrew Young, and Kamala Harris, the first woman, first Black American and first South Asian American to be elected vice president of the United States.





## TOP 10 HBCUs... cont'd



### 3 Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier University of Louisiana, in New Orleans is a nationally recognized leader in the STEM and health sciences fields. A significant number of Black alumni from the university graduate from medical school each year, and Xavier of Louisiana's College of Pharmacy is among the top producers of Black pharmacists. The university has also been ranked as one of the top 50 universities in the United States for STEM education by Learn.org, a website dedicated to helping students select institutions of higher learning. Xavier of Louisiana has an average freshman retention rate—an indicator of student satisfaction—of 74%. Notable university alumni are mathematician and NASA computer scientist Annie Easley, civil rights leader and politician Aaron Henry, and Ernest Nathan Morial, the first Black mayor of New Orleans.

### 4 Three-way tie between Hampton University, Morehouse College and Tuskegee University\*

#### Hampton University\*

Hampton University, set along the banks of the Virginia Peninsula, near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, offers students more than 80 undergraduate and graduate programs, including master's programs in health and physics. Popular majors include psychology, biology/biological sciences, business administration and management, journalism, and kinesiology and exercise science. Hampton University is surrounded by the City of Hampton, which features a wide array of business, historical, and industrial enterprises close to students, including Fort Monroe, the NASA Langley Research Center, and the Virginia Air & Space Science Center. Notable alumni include Booker T. Washington, broadcaster Spencer Christian, and Alberta Williams King, mother of Martin Luther King Jr.

#### Morehouse College\*

Morehouse College in Atlanta—the nation's only four-year, all-male, historically Black liberal arts institution—has a reputation for providing an academic foundation for Black men. The campus houses several centers and institutes, including: the Andrew Young Center for Global Leadership; the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center; and the Black Men's Research Institute—a pioneering initiative to study the economic, social, cultural, and personal outcomes of issues affecting Black men. In 2020, Morehouse also received a \$9-million grant from the National Science Foundation to be a founding partner of the HBCU STEM Undergraduate Success Research Center, an initiative designed to increase educational and employment opportunities for minorities interested in STEM subjects. Notable Morehouse alumni include the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Jeh Johnson, Julian Bond, Maynard Johnson, Herman Cain, and Spike Lee.

#### Tuskegee University\*

Tuskegee University, in Tuskegee, Ala., was the first college or university to create a nursing baccalaureate program in Alabama. The university continues supporting and developing the next generation of leaders through its LET US Academy (Leadership and Excellence by Tuskegee University Students). Tuskegee is a national top producer of Black aerospace science engineers, Black engineering graduates in chemical, electrical, and mechanical engineering, as well as Black Ph.D. holders in materials science and engineering. Tuskegee is also the only HBCU with a fully accredited College of Veterinary Medicine that offers the doctoral degree and produces more than 75 percent of Black veterinarians in the world. The campus was the academic home of scientist and inventor George Washington Carver, Lionel Richie, and Ralph Ellison. Tuskegee also educated World War II's Tuskegee Airmen, the first Black military aviators in the U.S. Army Air Corps, a precursor to the U.S. Air Force.





## TOP 10 HBCUs... cont'd

### 7 Florida A&M University

Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Fla., was designated as a top HBCU for Research and Development by the National Science Foundation. The university started its pharmacy and nursing program in 1951, and to give these students hands-on experience, a hospital was built. In 2012, FAMU implemented the Medical Scholars Program, a pre-medical program designed to prepare academically talented undergraduate students for success in medical school and beyond. Florida A&M University's popular majors include criminal justice, business, marketing, and psychology. The university is a member school of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund—a nonprofit named after the Supreme Court's first Black Supreme Court justice—which supports and represents some 300,000 students. Part of the FAMU campus is listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places as the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College Historic District. Notable FAMU alumni include former Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, actor Meschach Taylor, and Althea Gibson, one of the first Black athletes to cross the color line in international tennis.



### 8 Two-way tie between North Carolina A&T State University and Fisk University\*



#### North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University\*

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in Greensboro, N.C., has a strong history of, and commitment to, educating Black Americans. The largest HBCU in the nation, NCA&T produces a high number of Black engineers and ranks number 210 nationally among universities with the best computer science programs. Other popular majors include business, management, marketing, journalism, and veterinary science. The average freshman retention rate is 79 percent. A&T also ranks among the top universities nationally in upward social mobility—its success in educating graduates who make a significant jump in their standard of living. Notable alumni of NCA&T include the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Ronald McNair, Alma Adams, and Harold L. Martin.

#### Fisk University\*

Fisk University located in Nashville, Tenn., offers more than 20 undergraduate and graduate programs in fields such as biology, chemistry, physics, and clinical psychology. And the university's STEM-through Rocketry, Electronics, Engagement, and Coding Program was designed to increase retention of STEM students of color and women in physics, mathematics, chemistry, and computer science, as well as encourage them to pursue careers in engineering fields. Fisk is the alma mater of several civil rights icons, including W.E.B. DuBois and John Lewis, for whom the university's social justice center has been renamed, as well as poet Nikki Giovanni.



### 10 Two-way tie between Clafin and Delaware State University\*

#### Clafin University\*

Clafin University in Orangeburg, S.C., is the oldest HBCU in South Carolina and touts itself as being the first institution of higher learning in the state to welcome all students, regardless of race or gender. The university offers degrees through four schools: the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Business, and the School of Education. In 2019, the university established the Center for Social Justice, a "vehicle for transforming attitudes and thinking about race while also reshaping systems that have historically disadvantaged Black communities," say university officials. The center conducts diversity, equity and inclusion training for police departments, civic governments, and corporations around the country. Popular majors at Clafin include psychology, biology, business administration, criminal justice, marketing, media studies, and the RN to BSN nursing program. Notable alumni include gospel artist Bryan Andrew Wilson, actor E. Roger Mitchell, and athlete Chris McAlister.



## TOP 10 HBCUs... cont'd



### Delaware State University \*

Delaware State University, located in Dover, Del., has satellite campuses in Wilmington and Georgetown. The university offers more than 60 academic paths, from undergraduate programs in liberal arts to doctoral programs in high-level sciences such as neuroscience, optics, and mathematical physics. Popular majors include mass communications, business administration, and kinesiology, and researchers there are credited with innovative discoveries in fields such as medicine, military defense, and agriculture. As a part of the university's Internet2 initiative, Delaware State maintains several research computer laboratories including a high-performance computational cluster. The university also boasts several centers, including the Delaware Center for Enterprise Development, the Center for Information Technology Services, and the University Center for Economic Development and International Trade. Notable alumni include diplomat Clyde Bishop, astronaut Lodewijk van den Berg, athlete Jamaal Jackson, and jazz trumpeter and composer Clifford Brown. ■



For more information about top HBCUs, click [here](#).

## LINKS TO STEM EXCELLENCE

The Karsh STEM Scholars Program at Howard, the North Carolina A&T College of Engineering, and Spelman's Center of Excellence for Minority Women in STEM—take a look at these and other outstanding HBCU STEM programs.



**Center of Excellence for Minority Women in Stem**  
[spelman.edu/coe-mws](http://spelman.edu/coe-mws)

**The Karsh STEM Scholars Program at Howard University**  
[karshstemscholars.howard.edu](http://karshstemscholars.howard.edu)

**Xavier University of Louisiana's College of Pharmacy**  
[xula.edu/collegeofpharmacy](http://xula.edu/collegeofpharmacy)

**HBCU STEM-US Research Center**  
[stemuscenter.org](http://stemuscenter.org)

**Tuskegee LET US Academy**  
[tuskegee.edu/programs-courses/colleges-schools/caens/daes/undergraduate-research-and-mentoring/let-us-for-stem](http://tuskegee.edu/programs-courses/colleges-schools/caens/daes/undergraduate-research-and-mentoring/let-us-for-stem)

**Tuskegee College of Veterinary Medicine**  
[tuskegee.edu/programs-courses/colleges-schools/cvm](http://tuskegee.edu/programs-courses/colleges-schools/cvm)

**FAMU Medical Scholars Program**  
[support.famu.edu/cst/FAMU%20MSP%20Rack%20Card.pdf](http://support.famu.edu/cst/FAMU%20MSP%20Rack%20Card.pdf)

**Thurgood Marshall College Fund**  
[tmcf.org](http://tmcf.org)

**North Carolina A&T College of Engineering**  
[ncat.edu/coe/](http://ncat.edu/coe/)

**Fisk University's John Lewis Center for Social Justice**  
[fisk.edu/john-lewis-center-for-social-justice/](http://fisk.edu/john-lewis-center-for-social-justice/)

**Clafin University Center for Social Justice**  
[clafin.edu/academics-research/special-programs-and-opportunities/clafin-university-center-for-social-justice](http://clafin.edu/academics-research/special-programs-and-opportunities/clafin-university-center-for-social-justice)

**Delaware Center for Enterprise Development**  
[business.desu.edu/centers/delaware-center-enterprise-development](http://business.desu.edu/centers/delaware-center-enterprise-development)

# STEM-US Webinars Continue Helping to ‘Tell the Story’ of HBCUs

Webinars teach how to create, fund, and publish successful proposals for STEM projects at HBCUs.

To learn more about the HBCU Undergraduate Success Research Center, the Academic Pipeline, the Analytic Hub (the Center’s research arm), and more, visit the STEM-US center at its new website: [stemuscenter.org](https://stemuscenter.org)



## ABOUT STEM-US WEBINARS

Since September 2018, the HBCU STEM-US Research Center has offered several webinars designed to promote the positive identity of HBCUs. The webinars are coordinated by Mark Melton, Ph.D., interim provost and vice president of academic affairs at St. Augustine’s University.

Past topics have included “How to Identify Funding Sources,” “Planning for External Evaluation,” and “Strategies for Capacity Building at Small Private/Public HBCUs.”

Webinar presenters are representatives of federal and private agencies, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF). During each webinar, a moderator begins with several slides and then opens the floor/chat box for discussion.

“The basis of the webinars are HBCUs working together to develop strategies to write and submit competitive proposals,” Melton said. “And one of the best ways of promoting the accomplishments of HBCUs is for faculty members to publish peer review papers. Publishing data in peer review journals requires the acquisition of data through grants, and acquiring grants requires expertise in proposal writing.

“Consequently, one of our aims is to train faculty in proposal writing, so that faculty at HBCUs can tell our story.”

## Webinar topics recommended by NSF and now being considered:

- “Efficient Proposal Writing”
- “The Role of Evaluation in a Federal Grant”
- “Locating Appropriate Proposal Submission Programs”
- “Developing a Budget for a Proposal”
- “I was declined: Interpreting Reviewer Comments”
- “Spending Your Budget in a Timely Manner”
- “I’ve Been Funded: Grants Management”
- “No-Cost Extensions: What are They?”

## Submit Webinar Topics

Interested in new STEM webinars?



Contact:

**Mark A. Melton, Ph.D.**

*Interim Provost and*

*Vice President of Academic Affairs*

Saint Augustine’s University

1315 Oakwood Ave., Raleigh N.C. 27610

(919) 516-4029, [mamelton@st-aug.edu](mailto:mamelton@st-aug.edu)

# BIG BUSINESS OF FASHION COMES TO CAMPUS

**Polo Ralph Lauren celebrates Morehouse, Spelman in new collection.**



**I**n March, Ralph Lauren Corp. unveiled a limited-edition fashion collection inspired by “the rich heritage and esteemed traditions” at Morehouse and Spelman colleges in Atlanta. The “Polo Ralph Lauren Exclusively for Morehouse and Spelman Colleges Collection” is a first-of-its-kind collaboration for the business.

Launched along with the fashion collection in March were the film “A Portrait of the American Dream,” and a commemorative yearbook that details the founding and historical significance of HBCUs through the lens of Morehouse and Spelman.

Conceptualized and designed by Morehouse and Spelman alumni at Ralph Lauren, the Polo Ralph Lauren fashions honor the history of both colleges and widen the aperture of Ralph Lauren’s

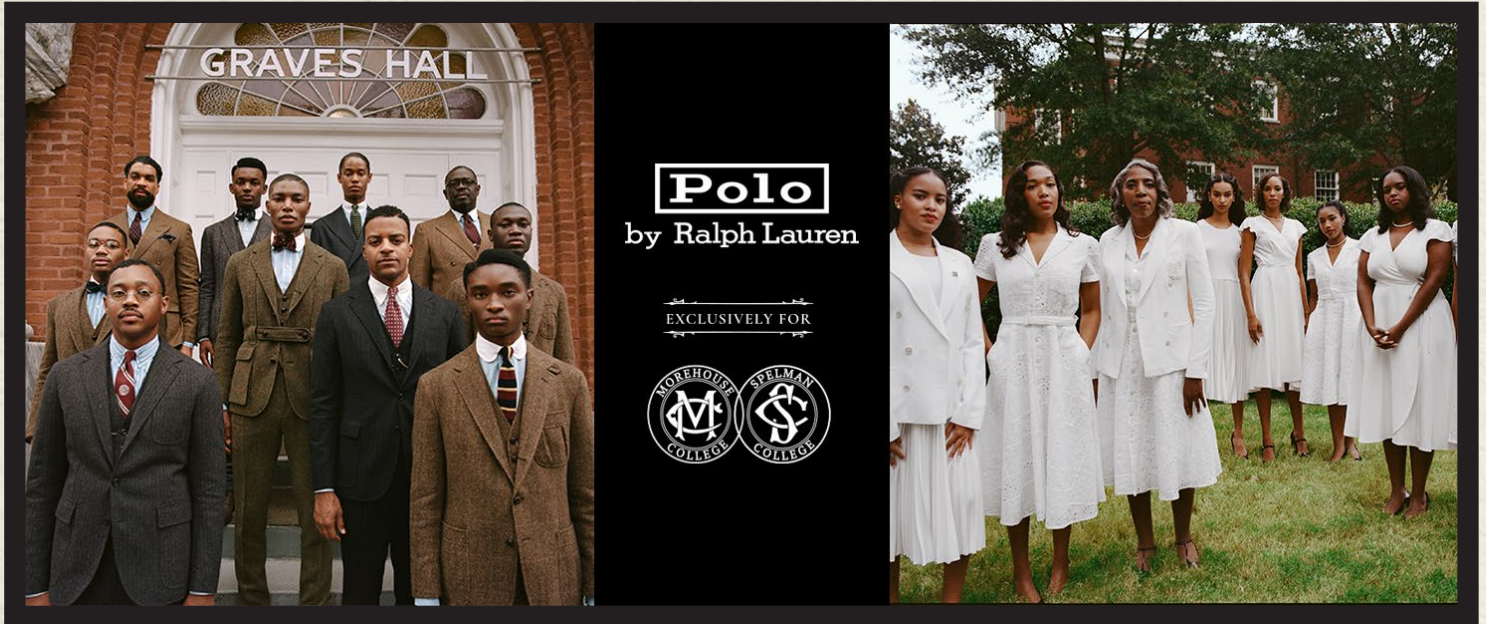


Photographer Nadine Ijewere

storytelling to include HBCUs, company officials said. The collection also marks the first time the brand has produced a campaign with an all-Black cast, including its photographer (acclaimed fashion photographer Nadine Ijewere), creative directors, cinematographer, and talent—predominantly comprising students, faculty, and alumni at both colleges.

“This collection expresses the spirited history, deep sense of community, and legacy of timeless dressing at historically Black colleges and universities,” said Ralph Lauren, himself, who serves as executive chairman and chief creative officer of Ralph Lauren Corp. “It’s so much more than a portrayal of a collegiate design sensibility. It’s about sharing a more complete and authentic portrait of American style and of the American dream—ensuring that stories of Black life and experiences are embedded in the inspiration and aspiration of our brand.”

## Big Business of Fashion... cont'd



The full collection, which includes outerwear, knits, tailored suits, dresses, footwear, and accessories, references styles worn by Morehouse and Spelman students from the 1920s to 1950s. The white patchwork eyelet-and-silk wrap dresses anchoring the Spelman collection, for example, symbolize the white attire ceremonies marking Spelman students' induction into the college. And the men's wool flannel blazers are an homage to the Morehouse jackets traditionally given to men of Morehouse during their first days on campus.

"Historically, Black colleges and universities have uniquely been centers of both intellectual discourse and cultural influence for more than 150 years," said David A. Thomas, Ph.D., president of Morehouse College. "The Morehouse partnership with Ralph Lauren intelligently, creatively, and

"This collection  
expresses the spirited  
history, deep sense  
of community, and  
legacy of timeless  
dressing at historically  
Black colleges and  
universities."

boldly puts this intersection on full display, reflecting the breadth of impact we have had in driving societal transformation throughout our history."

In 2020, Ralph Lauren made commitments to take action on racial equity and reexamine how the company portrays the American dream. Aligned with these commitments, the Ralph Lauren Corporate Foundation pledged \$2 million to support scholarships for students at Morehouse College, Spelman College, and 10 other HBCUs through the United Negro College Fund.

For more about the Polo Ralph Lauren collection, the film, "A Portrait of the American Dream," the yearbook, and the film's official trailer, click [here](#).

The fashions are now available in Ralph Lauren stores, on the Polo and Ralph Lauren apps, and in the Morehouse and Spelman college bookstores. ■



# NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS



## Alabama State University Students Win Top Awards at Research Frontier Symposium

Alabama State University (ASU) students won top awards at this year's virtual 2022 Research Frontier Symposium. The theme was "Innovation in STEM Research."

Among the 10 national awards presented to symposium winners, ASU won half. And six Alabama State students won top honors. All contestants competed in two event categories, in oral and poster presentation formats.

ASU students Kiersten McCalpine and Kelci Lawrence won awards for oral presentations. Vanella Tadjuidje, Corrigan Murry and Asia Turner (joint team); and Jordan-Haley McWilliams were ASU winners in poster presentations.

Other winners included: Christopher J. Gisriel (Yale University); Stephanie Monge (Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica); and Atindrah Harishankar, who attends Montgomery's LAMP High School.

The symposium is a national event highlighting academic research with a concentration on STEM subjects. ■



Vet Tech students at FAMU are giving medical care to dogs at Tallahassee Animal Services.



## Bean Beetle Microbiome Project: Workshops Open to Faculty Nationwide

Participants will learn how to implement new course-based undergraduate research experience (CURE).



Lawrence S. Blumer, biology professor at Morehouse College and coordinator of the bean beetle workshops.

Two Bean Beetle Microbiome Project workshops for faculty members nationwide will be offered in 2022. Participants will learn about the benefits of course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs), gain the skills necessary to implement the bean beetle microbiome CURE in a full or half-semester format, and learn about conducting microbiome community ecology research with bean beetles.

An online workshop will be conducted over five afternoons during the week of May 23-27, and an in-person workshop on the Emory University campus in Atlanta is scheduled over 2 ½ days the week of June 5-8.

To accommodate faculty in the online workshop, and to prevent online fatigue, the virtual workshop is scheduled for five days, in two- to three-hour sessions each day. Meetings will begin each day at 1:10 p.m. EDT and finish by 4 p.m. The in-person workshop begins at 8 a.m. on Sunday with full-day activities on Monday and Tuesday. The workshop ends after lunch on Wednesday.

Workshops are open to all college and university faculty. "The online workshop will be most appropriate for faculty who have access to a laboratory during the workshop for some brief wet lab activities," said Lawrence S. Blumer, Ph.D., professor of biology at Atlanta's Morehouse College. "Wet lab activities will be performed at the in-person workshop."

Participants are expected to be able to teach in-person labs during the 2022-2023 academic year, and priority will be given to faculty members who apply in pairs. Applications will be reviewed beginning April 30. ■

### APPLICATION AND CONTACTS

- For more information and an application, click [here](#).
- Blumer can be reached at [lawrence.blumer@morehouse.edu](mailto:lawrence.blumer@morehouse.edu)
- Contact Christopher W. Beck at Emory University at [christopher.beck@emory.edu](mailto:christopher.beck@emory.edu)

## It's a Win-Win for Shelter Dogs and Vet Tech Students at FAMU

Florida A&M University's (FAMU) Veterinary Tech students are getting hands-on experience this year by giving medical care and treatment to dogs in Tallahassee's animal shelter.

FAMU's partnership with the City of Tallahassee Animal Services gives the vet-tech students some experience, and increases the dogs' chances of being adopted, after receiving treatment.

"The fact that we have a vet-tech program here in town is amazing, and we're so excited to be partnered with them," Dr. Rachel Barton, the city's chief veterinarian, said about the win-win program. "The dogs are certainly benefiting from it, and it's really helping us out too. The students are providing medical care that we might not otherwise be able to provide here in the shelter."

Some 40 undergraduate students are participating in the vet-tech program. ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS... cont'd

# ColorComm

Women of Color in Communications

## ColorComm Inc. Holds Fifth Annual HBCU Fellows Program, Recruiting Summit

*Fellowship program provides female, minority students with resources to succeed in mass communications.*

ColorComm, a leading women's platform addressing diversity and inclusion in communications, marketing, advertising, and media industries, brings together, virtually, the most promising female, minority, mass communications students from HBCUs with thousands of multicultural professionals. The exclusive, year-long program provides students with mentorship, professional development opportunities, access to the full ColorComm network, and a direct pipeline to leading media companies and brands. As they build their professional networks, with key decision-makers, the Fellows also meet regularly with their own group.

"As a proud graduate of Spelman College, I can recall the challenges entering the communications industry as a student looking for a full-time position," said Lauren Wesley Wilson, founder and CEO of ColorComm. "HBCU students often face greater challenges to land top media and communications positions, as the same companies frequent the same schools and often overlook the wide variety of HBCUs. The ColorComm NextGen HBCU Fellows Program gives greater access to companies to engage with the best talent, and provides students with the access, resources, and knowledge to succeed after graduation."

To be eligible for the year-long program, students must be either recent HBCU graduates (one to three years out of school) or be current HBCU juniors or seniors. Applicants are evaluated on academic achievements, how they give back to their communities, extracurricular activities, and their professional plans.

"This fellowship gives me a chance to network and an opportunity to work outside of my comfort zone," said Diana Brown, a communications scholar at Claflin University and 2022 Fellow. "ColorComm will allow me to meet executives and professionals in the communications industry. Without this program, these networking opportunities may not have been possible."

Brown, from Conyers, Ga., plans to begin her career in news production.

For more information about ColorComm's NextGen HBCU Fellows Program and Recruitment Summit, click [here](#). ■



"Without this program, these networking opportunities may not have been possible."

— LAUREN WESLEY WILSON



## Fisk Fellowships Honor Late Congressman, Activist John Lewis

*Three fellowships are focused on continued fight for justice, including policy, the arts, and STEM.*

Fisk University in Nashville has established three fellowships to support the university's John Lewis Center for Social Justice. The Center, founded in 2019, fosters and advances social justice through research, scholarship, artistic production, and community engagement, locally, as well as globally.



Karida L. Brown, Ph.D.

The fellowships are designed to have three areas of social justice impact: policy/activism, arts/culture, and tech/data science. The policy/activism fellow will follow in the footsteps of Lewis, a Fisk alumnus, by continuing the fight against bigotry and confronting attacks on civil rights. The arts/culture fellow will be inspired by Fisk artists, poets, and musicians, such as Nikki Giovanni and the Fisk Jubilee Singers, who promote social justice through their work. And the tech/data science fellow will reportedly advance the tradition of Fisk alumnus W.E.B. DuBois in shaping the evolving data, science, and tech fields toward ensuring full and equitable access to Black communities, both as consumers and producers.

"Fisk University has always been synonymous with a global concern for equality, inclusion, and prosperity," said Fisk University President Vann Newkirk. "From W.E.B DuBois to Ida B. Wells, John R. Lewis and Diane Nash, Fisk has helped shape a better world for more than one hundred and fifty years."

Karida L. Brown, Ph.D., has been named the center director.

Lewis fought for justice while a student at Fisk, taking an active role in the civil rights movement. He earned a bachelor's degree in religion and philosophy from Fisk in 1967.

For more on the John Lewis Center for Social Justice, click [here](#). ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS... cont'd

### Saint Augustine's Mark Melton Appointed Interim Provost and VP of Academic Affairs



Mark A. Melton, Ph.D.

Saint Augustine's University (SAU) President Christine Johnson McPhail has named Mark A. Melton to the post of Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs through June 2022. Melton previously served as a professor of biology and dean of the SAU School of Sciences, Mathematics, and Allied Health.

Melton has held positions in several administrative capacities, including department chair of biological and physical sciences, director of the university's honors program, and program director for the NIH-MARC U\*STAR Program, a federally funded student research training program.

"He strives to be a positive 'change agent' as the university continues to forge ahead in its efforts to produce some of the best and brightest scholars," said McPhail.

Melton has served as both a principal investigator and director of several grants secured from the National Institutes of Health, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Department of Education, and the National Science Foundation—grants totaling more than \$10 million. He has also conducted workshops on competitive grant writing and the importance of external evaluation at academic institutions in the United States and Antigua.

"I've been fairly successful getting federal grants over the years, and when I started serving on STEM-related review panels, I saw firsthand that the quality of a lot of the proposals from HBCUs were not as competitive as they needed to be," Melton explained. "Not enough time was put into the writing. As a result of that, I had the idea to start a consortium for HBCUs where we would work together before submitting."

Melton created an ongoing webinar series on grant writing for the HBCU STEM-US Research Center.

He holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a master's degree in developmental biology from North Carolina A&T State University, and a doctorate in developmental neurophysiology from the University of Maryland at College Park. Melton also conducted postdoctoral research in molecular genetics at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. ■



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S  
UNIVERSITY



Transform. Excel. Lead

### MSNBC President Gives Back to Hampton Through Journalism Scholarship Fund

Hampton University alumna Rashida Jones gives scholarships to three students.



Rashida Jones

Three students in Hampton University's Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications are recipients of inaugural Rashida Jones Scholarships. The financial gift, launched by MSNBC President Rashida Jones, a 2002 Hampton University alumna, will be provided annually to Hampton University students studying journalism.

Junior Eryn DeShields of Odenton, Md., senior Jonathan Scott of Apopka, Fla., and senior Lauren Turman of West Chester, Pa., each were awarded individual scholarships that will help cover their tuition costs.

"We appreciate her gracious gift and salute her as a leading executive in TV network news, and for paving the way for future journalists," said Julia Wilson, dean of the journalism and communications school. "Our school has Hampton graduates working at some of the nation's top news networks and newspapers, and corporations, public relations, and marketing firms."



Scholarship recipients from left: Lauren Turman, Jonathan Scott, and Eryn DeShields.



Jones received her bachelor's degree in mass media arts, with a concentration in broadcast journalism, from Hampton in 2002. In 2018, she was inducted into the Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications Hall of Fame for her outstanding work. She became the first Black executive to lead a major television news network when she was appointed president in February 2021.

"I will always have a special place in my heart for Hampton University," Jones said. "It helped me gain the skills and confidence to dive into the competitive world of journalism and television news. I hope this contribution can help and inspire Eryn, Jonathan, and Lauren as they prepare for their next chapter." ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS... cont'd



### HBCU STEM Professors Receive Presidential Awards for Excellence

*STEM leaders presented with highest U.S. award for science, mathematics and engineering mentoring.*

Mohsen Mosleh, Ph.D., a professor of mechanical engineering at Howard University, and Mohammed Qazi, Ph.D., a professor in the mathematics department at Tuskegee University, were each presented in March with the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM).

PAESMEM recognizes mentors for their efforts to inspire and encourage individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities in STEM and their efforts to ensure that all Americans can fully participate in science, mathematics, and technology, regardless of gender, race, resources, or geography.

Each individual and organizational awardee receives a \$10,000 award and a commemorative Presidential certificate. Awardees are also invited to participate in an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., and attend meetings with STEM education, research, and policy leaders.

The PAESMEM award was established by the White House in 1995. The PAESMEM program is administered by the National Science Foundation on behalf of the U.S. Office of Science and Technology Policy.



#### MOHSEN MOSLEH, PH.D

Mosleh has been a professor of mechanical engineering at Howard University since 1996. He has served as acting associate dean for research and graduate education in the College of Engineering and Architecture, and as graduate program director in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Mosleh has mentored, or directed the mentorship of more than 120 students, primarily Blacks/African Americans and women—populations underrepresented in STEM. He has also advised 35 postdoctoral, doctoral, master's, and undergraduate students in research and directed the mentorship of 87 undergraduate students

through the Industry-Research Inclusion in STEM Education program, an initiative he established in 2019 and currently directs.

Mosleh holds bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from Amirkabir University of Technology in Tehran, and a doctorate in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His honors include: Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; Outstanding Teaching Award from the American Society for Engineering Education; Eminent Engineer Award from Tau Beta Pi Honor Society; the Faculty Exemplar Medal from the Graduate School at Howard University; and the Rabinowicz Tribology Award from MIT.



#### MOHAMMED QAZI, PH.D.

Qazi began teaching mathematics at Tuskegee in 2000, following a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. As the associate dean for research and outreach in the College of Arts and Sciences at Tuskegee, one of his responsibilities is to mentor faculty members to advance their research portfolios. His STEM mentoring programs provide opportunities for individuals from underrepresented communities to gain STEM experiences and promote their persistence and success in these fields.

Qazi also helps to forge broad alliances among school districts, postsecondary institutions, and other stakeholders who address deep and persistent problems in broadening STEM participation. His efforts are supported by NSF grants, and he has co-authored journal papers focusing on STEM broadening participation and mentoring.

"I view mentoring as a bilateral, mutually beneficial partnership between all those who are involved in the mentoring process, whether in the context of teaching, research, or outreach," said Qazi. "This award is testimony to the commitment of many stakeholders to work together and use the powerful tool of mentoring to address the most complex problems in broadening STEM participation."

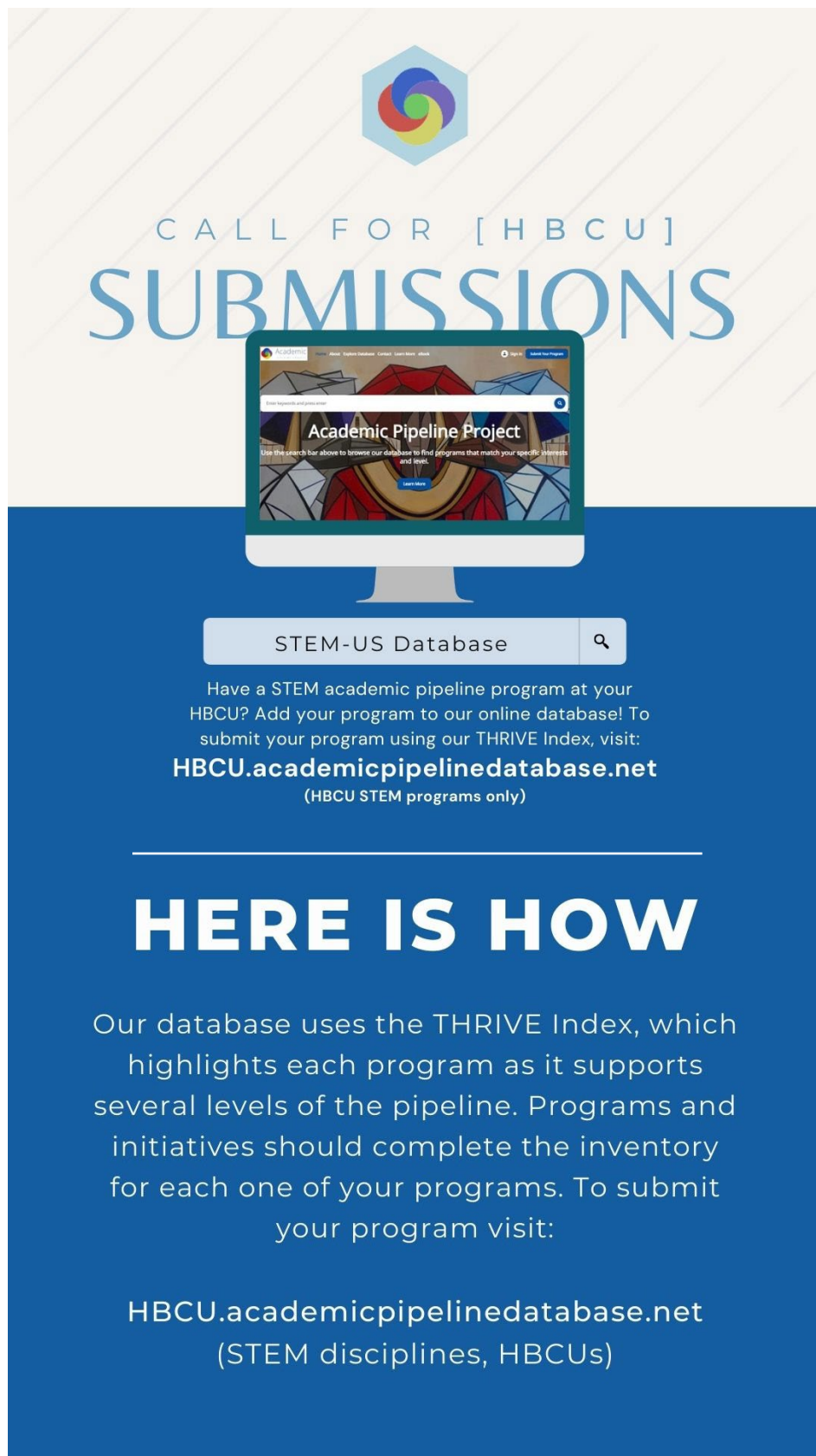
Qazi completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in mathematics from the Université de Montréal, Montréal, Canada. He earned his doctorate in applied mathematics from the École Polytechnique de Montréal. In recognition of his mentoring initiatives and research activities, Mohammed was awarded the 2012 Tuskegee University Faculty Achievement Award. ■

To learn more about PAESMEM, click [here](#).

Additional information from the White House [announcement](#).

PAESMEM recognizes mentors for their efforts to inspire and encourage individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities in STEM and their efforts to ensure that all Americans can fully participate in science, mathematics, and technology, regardless of gender, race, resources, or geography.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS... cont'd



CALL FOR [HBCU]  
SUBMISSIONS

Academic Pipeline Project

STEM-US Database

Have a STEM academic pipeline program at your HBCU? Add your program to our online database! To submit your program using our THRIVE Index, visit:  
**HBCU.academicpipelinedatabase.net**  
(HBCU STEM programs only)

# HERE IS HOW

Our database uses the THRIVE Index, which highlights each program as it supports several levels of the pipeline. Programs and initiatives should complete the inventory for each one of your programs. To submit your program visit:

**HBCU.academicpipelinedatabase.net**  
(STEM disciplines, HBCUs)



## sproutsocial

### Sprout Social Helps Howard University Create Center for Digital Business



Sprout Social Inc., a provider of cloud-based social media management software for businesses, has announced a \$100,000 annual contribution to Howard University's School of Business for the creation and management of the university's new Center for Digital Business, as well as related business education offerings and programming over the next two years.

The contribution will help support the center's director, develop course curriculum, and provide Sprout technology for student and faculty research.



Cassandra Blackburn

"At Sprout, we believe it's critical to play an active role in the development of the next generation of Black business leaders," said Sprout's Director of Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion Cassandra Blackburn. "We're excited to be building a multidimensional relationship with Howard University and look forward to supporting students as they ascend into their professional careers within tech."

The Center for Digital Business will provide a space within Howard University's School of Business to facilitate education, collaboration, and innovation among students, faculty, staff, and business leaders, university officials said. ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS... cont'd



# HBCU STEM-US Research Center Scholars Offer Emerging Lessons from the Pandemic

Brittany Chambers, Ed.D., and Adrian N. Neely, Ph.D.—both post-doctoral research scholars with the HBCU STEM-US Research Center based at Morehouse College—presented at the two-day, inaugural Norfolk State University Stith Retention Conference on March 30-31. The theme of the virtual conference was “Remarkable Resilience: Translating Trials into Triumphs.”

The title of the researchers' presentation was: “Examining Stories of Resilient Freshmen Undergraduate STEM Majors: Emerging Lessons from the Trenches During a Global Pandemic and a Natural Disaster.” The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of a STEM intervention course on the learning experiences of undergraduate STEM majors living through a global pandemic and a natural disaster,” researchers explained in their abstract. (See abstract below.)

“The theme of resilience is significant as it embodies our collective response to the challenges of COVID-19, and our ability to foster an academic environment to retain and support our students' academic ability,” said Norfolk State Associate Provost Andrea Neal. “It represents the perseverance of our remarkable students to overcome countless obstacles as they pursue their degrees.”



Brittany Chambers, Ed.D.



Adrian N. Neely, Ph.D.

### ABSTRACT

The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic created the largest disruption to traditional forms of teaching and learning in schools across the nation, and globally. By March of 2020, schools around the world discontinued face-to-face teaching and moved to virtual platforms of online learning, forcing K-12 schools and institutions of higher learning to immediately transform their teaching practices to an online space. We are enduring a paradigm shift as educators adjust practices to deliver online instruction while students adapt to alternative forms of learning.



## Virginia State to Host Conference On Fostering Learner Success

Virginia State University (VSU) will host the 16th annual Academy of Process Educators conference next month.

“Fostering Learner Success by Focusing on Self-Growth and Agency: Students, Teachers, and Institutions” will take place May 24-26 with hybrid options, online or face-to-face, at Virginia State. A pre-conference workshop is scheduled Monday, May 23.

The theme of the conference has been informed by findings from the Analytic Hub, the collaborative research arm of the HBCU STEM-US Center and based on research that examined data by nearly 3,000 HBCU student participants from more than a dozen institutions. Faculty, staff, and administrators are invited to contribute to the ongoing research by sharing their ideas on promoting methods and strategies designed to increase student learning, growth, and development.

“Many of the learning and growth challenges we face depend on developing metacognitive knowledge, skills, and ways of being,” said conference organizers. “Helping to cultivate self-awareness and self-ownership of learning, as well as adopting habits of introspection and self-growth, is an educative challenge that requires alignment of student, teacher, and institutional action.”

This joint conference is presented by STAR-2.0, a research project examining methods to improve Supplemental Instruction at VSU in partnership with the Academy of Process Educators. Click here to register. For more information, click [here](#). ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE BRIEFS... cont'd

### Emerging Lessons Abstract... cont'd

For K-12 public school students living in under-resourced communities, this shift may exacerbate long standing educational inequities that Black children must overcome. Researchers posit that many students attending under-resourced schools often lack the opportunity to learn essential skills to handle the academic demands of studying at the postsecondary level. The lack of and access to science resources, such as an equipped science laboratory, contributes to the deficit in knowledge and skills of incoming freshman Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) majors at postsecondary institutions. Given the longstanding legacy of discrimination and oppression experienced by African American youth, it is important to examine the ways the pandemic may deepen the existing educational debt.”

This qualitative case study draws on the lived experiences of nine undergraduate

STEM majors enrolled in a Utilitarian Scientific Literacy course at an HBCU located in a metropolitan city in the South. The course was designed to provide students with the necessary skills to increase student retention and persistence in STEM undergraduate majors. We used Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) methods of open, axial, and selective coding to identify a final coding scheme that best represents our data and the perspectives of our participants.

We applied this coding scheme to multiple data sources and identified three overarching themes that centered on being self-aware of the challenges that impede achievement, developing essential skills for STEM success, and establishing a growth mindset. Next, we used Spencer’s (1997) Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST), a contextually sensitive, identity-focused theoretical framework

that accounts for culture and ecology to understand the vulnerability and resilience of our participants.

Overall, our findings indicate that incorporating growth mindset principles, reflective practices, and essential skill-building activities were critical for supporting students transitioning from high school virtual learning to in-person postsecondary learning during a global pandemic. The results provide insights into the effectiveness of these activities and the impact this approach can have on African American student retention and broadening participation in STEM majors. This article aims to provide a pathway for understanding the impact of interventions on STEM retention in postsecondary institutions that address deficits resulting from disruptions in K-12 and alternative pedagogical practices that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. ■



# HBCU STEM Undergraduate Success (STEM-US) Research Center

## PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS



Lawrence Blumer, Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology  
Morehouse College



Derrick M. Bryan, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of  
Sociology/Division Chair  
Morehouse College



Brittany Chambers, Ed.D.  
Adjunct Faculty, Morehouse  
College Postdoctoral Researcher  
Morehouse College



Danielle Dickens, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Psychology  
Spelman College



Cheryl Talley, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of  
Neuroscience  
Virginia State University



Shondricka N. Lamb, M.S.  
Associate Director  
STEM-US Research Center  
Morehouse College



Alicia P. Thomas, M.S.  
Technical Director  
STEM-US Research Center  
Morehouse College

MOREHOUSE | SPELMAN | VIRGINIA STATE



The HBCU STEM Undergraduate Success Research Center (STEM-US) at Morehouse College studies how the formation of scientific identity in HBCU students builds confidence and motivates them to graduate and succeed with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics degrees. The STEM-US Research Center also aims to disseminate information that impacts mainstream education reform in STEM areas and promote the academic value of an HBCU education. STEM-US is supported by a National Science Foundation (NSF)-HBCU Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP) Broadening Participation Research Center grant, number 1818458.