

BLACK ALUMNI COLLECTIVE STATEMENT ON PRO-DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION LEGISLATION AND SUPPORT MOVEMENT

Last Revision: May 1, 2024

The Black Alumni Collective (BAC) firmly believes that a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment is essential for a thriving democracy. We stand with all students, faculty, and staff in advocating for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs and staff that foster a culture of respect, understanding, and belonging.

BAC fully supports Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in all its rich diverse forms (race, gender, disability, veteran status, etc.), especially state-funded institutions. Together, we believe these programs must educate the public and counter recent trends that limit or eliminate affirmative action and related programs.

At this inflection point in American history, BAC plans to partner with leaders of goodwill to fight legislation and initiatives that eliminate diversity and race-conscious programs. In recent months, spurred by the Supreme Court Affirmative Action decision against Harvard and UNC, we have witnessed the disturbing trend of bans on Black History, the evisceration of race-conscious admissions programs, and the villainization of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs more broadly, including the elimination of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion completely at schools in Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Kentucky, Montana, and Texas.

Recently, these and other states have enacted legislation banning support of institutions that engage in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, which compromises much of what has been accomplished in the past 50-60 years as it relates to advancing equity goals in American society.

BAC calls on all Black Alumni leaders, allies, and friends to defend these initiatives through various actions, including:

1. Encourage all alumni and students of age to register to vote.
2. Include civic engagement action items around: Voter Registration, Education, Mobilization, and Protection.
3. Invite civic leaders to join monthly Black alumni association meetings to discuss these issues.
4. Support the efforts of the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid to help improve the yield of admitted Black students that follow through and enroll at your college/university.
5. Complete a voter registration education experience.
6. Organize a community service activity to transport individuals to designated polling places.
7. Collaborate with civic and social organizations in the immediate campus community.
8. Join the board of and/or volunteer for a civic engagement organization.
9. Incorporate thought leadership pieces in op-eds in local and national publications.
10. Encourage Black alumni to participate in the political process, including data analysis, policy review, and the pursuit of elected offices at the local, state, and national levels.
11. Reinforce the positive impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs on academic excellence, enriching learning environments with diverse perspectives and fostering critical thinking.

The BAC commits to the following:

- 1. Convene Black alumni leaders from across universities and colleges to discuss major issues that impact Black students and alumni.**
- 2. Mobilize thought leaders to develop an Advocacy Toolkit.**
- 3. Integrate Voter Registration Education into future conferences and national gatherings.**

Finally, the BAC urges policymakers at all levels to enact solutions aligned with equal protection under the law and uphold this nation's founding principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion best summed up America's motto "*E Pluribus Unum*" – Out of many, one. We call upon all citizens to exercise their civic duty by voting and participating in the democratic process to uphold the core principles of America, including equity and inclusion and justice.

In Service,

The Black Alumni Collective
www.blackalumnicollective.org