

## **Accelerator: HBCU Research & Policy Institute**

Case For Support Executive Summary | Updated August, 2021

*The following proposal captures best practices and modeled after the work of Timothy A. Minor, Vice President University Advancement, The University of North Carolina System and Erskine “Chuck” Faush, Founder of the YARD HBCU Platform and Chief Development & Innovation Officer, Chicago Urban League. We appreciate the opportunity to partner and develop the plan to disrupt the traditional revenue model largely dependent on one stream accounting for two thirds of all income, to a diversified portfolio of multiple, sustainable revenue streams resulting in systemic change, increased recruitment and retention.*

Minor is the vice president for University Advancement for the University of North Carolina System. He is responsible for administrative direction and support for external funding to meet the priority needs within the UNC multi-campus university which is composed of all 17 of North Carolina’s public institutions. Prior to joining the UNC System Office, Timothy served as the associate vice chancellor for University Advancement at North Carolina A&T State University for five years where he led fundraising initiatives and day-to-day operations of A&T’s central development office. Minor started his career at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, followed by 12 years at UNC at Chapel Hill as a senior member serving in various major gift director roles in the University’s \$500 million Bicentennial Campaign and the university’s largest campaign, the \$2.3 billion Carolina First Campaign.

Faush is Chief Development & Innovation Officer for the nations largest Urban League leading revenue generation and modernizing engagement operational systems having produced in 2020-21 the highest revenue gain in the Leagues history. Prior to Joining the League was a member of the Executive Team of one of the nations largest privately held media companies that doubled in size and was responsible for leading digital and experiential divisions. He served as Chief of Staff for the City of Birmingham leading teams in public private partnerships, human capital development and legislative policy with \$500M operational and \$1B capital budgets respectively.

The American Council on Education predicts a 15 percent Fall college enrollment decline, mostly from out-of-state students who pay higher tuition at state schools. Close to 50 percent of HBCUs are state schools whose budgets will be reduced by this income shortage as growing numbers of financially distressed students will consider safer, less expensive, and closer-to-home higher education choices. The generally smaller and already financially strained private HBCUs will find it difficult to sustain themselves with further enrollment decreases, not easily recoverable in a post-coronavirus vaccine America. Even the upper-tiered and robustly endowed institutions like Morehouse (\$112 million), Hampton (\$ 275 million), Xavier (\$171 million) and Spelman (\$285 million) will be tested. Public and private HBCU endowments are roughly 70 percent smaller than those of predominately White institutions (PWIs). None of the 90 colleges with endowments of more than \$1 billion

is an HBCU, and even the wealthiest, Howard University, with upwards of \$570 million ranks one hundred and sixtieth, an outlier for HBCUs. According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the median endowment at HBCUs is \$12 million, compared to the median endowment of \$23 million for comparable PWIs. North Carolina, home to 10 HBCUs, more than any other state, has only North Carolina A&T (\$57 million) ranking in the top 10 for HBCU endowments. The proverbial rainy day is upon us, and modest HBCU endowments will demand calculated budget adjustments. Recent stimulus and corporate giving has provided the much needed revenue bridge following the pandemic however the sustainability depends on a new economy with diversified revenue sources and sustainable, investable programming.

The Accelerator models after the North Carolina System successes in well planned, collaborative system to encourage effective and efficient corporate, foundational and individual giving, shared resources with economies of scale and brand values. The Accelerator is a convener of thought leadership, practitioners and policy makers to address inequities and align systemic change of the HBCU ecosystem with data driven, evidence based focus groups, learned behaviors and best practice models to recommend practices and policy.

The Accelerator embraces what generations of black professionals already know, HBCUs drive social and economic development. Three areas have been identified launching with existing partnered colleges:

- services collaboration
- targeted endowment scaling
- online degree offerings

With guidance from current and past administrators serving as an Advisory Group, The Accelerator enhances the proven North Carolina System program by identifying processes and algorithms that are applicable and replicable to HBCU's with focus groups, applied learning and skilled, human capital. This effort goes beyond theoretical training often housed in a vacuum and partners HBCU talent with experienced program talent.

The Accelerator has the benefit of relationships developed with The YARD.

The YARD launched in 2019, visioned with Mayor Stephen Benjamin, past President of the US Conference of Mayors, as a vehicle to meet the challenge of [innovation, inclusion, and infrastructure](#) across the US. A challenge now now serving as the framework for anticipated legislation and unprecedented funding. In the past two years, The YARD has awarded six Universities \$250K in scholarships, grants, internships, and innovation hub installations in 2019 and entered 2020 with additional scaled commitments in a three year commitment from Vulcan Materials Company, the world's largest producer of aggregate materials with a \$1 million

commitment in scholarships, institutional grants, and infrastructure investment. This year, in partnership with [Tennessee State University](#), [Alabama A&M University](#), Vulcan Materials Company, and The YARD launched a Dream Space Innovation Hub on each college campus. e Dream Space allows students to achieve collaborative learning.

[THE YARD](#) platform of tech, talent and culture has launched YARD + , a Network by, for and with HBCU students providing curated content and dedicated algorithm with insights for corporate and institution talent recruitment and retention. To drive engagement, The YARD recently invested in one of the THINK BIG PITCH student finalists to further develop an interactive app with content and entertainment.

HBCUs are micro-communities, even when located in the middle of major urban areas. The undeniable sense of community extends from students and alumni into the very fabric of black culture with intense loyalists who have proven to be the breeding ground for black professionals with local and global [economic impact](#) for over a century.

Until recently, HBCUs have been underfunded and underrepresented; land rich and cash poor. [Recent contributions](#) have skyrocketed.

The targeted institutions include Miles College, Alabama State University, Alabama A&M University, Tuskegee University, Tennessee State University, North Carolina A&T University, and Benedict College. Each campus will have a fully operational digital broadcast station that will feature multiple music, talk, sports, and entertainment genres. Each campus will offer traditional and online coursework that will earn students an industry-recognized and accredited Bachelor of Arts Degree. This expansion will take place over a five (5) year period.

### **Alabama State University**

Alabama State University's 153-year history is a legacy of perseverance, progress, and promise. The ASU movement began with the impetus to establish a school for black Alabamians. The Civil War resulted in the end of slavery and the opportunity for blacks to have the right to education. ASU was born in that movement. ASU is the product of nine freed slaves from Marion, AL., now known as the Marion Nine, who sought to build a school for African Americans previously denied the right to an education. The Marion Nine and original trustees, with assistance from Marion community members, raised \$500 for land and filed incorporation papers to establish the Lincoln Normal School at Marion. The Lincoln School opened with 113 students. In 1873, it became the nation's first state-sponsored liberal arts institution for blacks' higher education, beginning ASU's rich history as a "Teacher's College."<sup>i</sup> ASU is also widely recognized and renowned for the role in the Civil Rights Movement. Even

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.alasu.edu/about-asu/history-tradition>

though officials in a state committed to segregation retaliated against the school with a decrease in funding, ASU continued to persevere and flourish so that today it is a model of diversity and equal opportunity for all. Simultaneously, ASU is a beacon in the legacy of black leadership and the preservation and celebration of African American culture.<sup>ii</sup> Dr. Quinton T. Ross, Jr., currently serves as the 15th President of Alabama State University. Before becoming President of his alma mater, he had begun his fourth term in the Alabama State Senate after being elected to his first term in 2002. While serving in the Senate, Dr. Ross distinguished himself as a true statesman and was one of seven African Americans serving in the Alabama State Senate.<sup>iii</sup>

### **Alabama A&M University**

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University (*AAMU*) is a historic, student-friendly, and community-focused institution of higher learning. AAMU is a historically black college and university (HBCU) and a traditional 1890 land-grant institution; AAMU functions as a teaching, research, and public service institution, including extension. Founded in 1875 by a former slave, Dr. William Hooper Council, AAMU is a dynamic and progressive institution with a strong commitment to academic excellence. The serene, intimate campus is situated on "The Hill," only a short distance from downtown Huntsville, the school's founding site.

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University provides more than 60 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs and concentrations, a diverse international faculty, 50 plus student organizations, and an extensive alumni network, many of whom are change agents on the local, national, and international stage.<sup>iv</sup> Dr. Andrew Hugine, Jr. serves as the 11<sup>th</sup> president of AAMU. He came to AAMU after over 30 years at South Carolina State University. Since being at the school, he has led efforts to have the accreditation reaffirmed, strengthen the financial status, and increase the campus footprint.<sup>v</sup>

### **North Carolina A&T State University**

North Carolina A&T was formed in 1891 with the intention "to teach practical agriculture and mechanic arts and such branches of learning as relate to it, not excluding academic and classical instruction to African American citizens of North

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<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.alasu.edu/about-asu/historytradition/asu-legacy-perseverance-progress-and-promise>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.alasu.edu/presidents>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.aamu.edu/about/index.html>

<sup>v</sup><https://www.aamu.edu/about/university-leadership/president/about-president.html>

Carolina."<sup>vi</sup> The school conferred its first degrees in 1899. In 1928, the school became coeducational, accepting both male and female students. In 1957, the school expanded to include Master's Degrees. It is also known for its rich and deeply rooted role in the Civil Rights Movement. Most notably, in 1960, the work of the A&T Four and their demonstrations for raising awareness and ending segregation.

Throughout its rich heritage, A&T boasts iconic and influential graduates, including two-time presidential nominee Rev. Jesse Jackson and Dr. Ronald E. McNair, who orbited the earth in the Challenger space shuttle and died in the later Challenger explosion. In 2009, Dr. Harold L. Martin, Sr. became the 12<sup>th</sup> chancellor and first alumnus to serve in that position. Dr. Martin has been invaluable in leadership positions on campus and beyond. He has been nationally recognized for his thought leadership. A&T has also been selected as the #1 public HBCU in the nation and the largest by US News and World Report and designated as the most affordable of North Carolina's top universities by Money Magazine.

### **Tennessee State University**

Tennessee State University (TSU) was founded in 1912 after its organization in 1909 as the Agricultural and Industrial State Normal School. TSU is located in beautiful historic Nashville, TN. TSU is a comprehensive, urban, coeducational, land-grant institution that currently has two campuses.<sup>vii</sup> TSU has a rich legacy, both nationally and internationally. It has been designated a "high research" institution by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Tennessee State strives for excellence in programming, offerings, and community engagement.

Dr. Glenda Baskin Glover, a proud TSU alumnus, is the 8<sup>th</sup> and first female president of the university. She has advanced a five-point vision that includes: (1) academic progress and customer service, (2) fundraising and partnerships, (3) diversity and inclusion, (4) shared governance, and (5) business outreach. Previously Dr. Glover was the Dean of the College of Business at Jackson State University in Jackson, MS., where she led the College of Business throughout the accreditation process and spearheaded the implementation of the nation's first Ph.D. in Business at an HBCU. She is a certified public accountant, an attorney, and is one of two African American women to hold the Ph.D.-CPA-JD combination in the nation. Under her leadership, The University's academic offerings have increased to 45 bachelor's degrees, 24 master's degrees, and seven doctorate degrees. Educational offerings

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<sup>vi</sup> <https://www.ncat.edu/about/history-and-traditions/index.php>

<sup>vii</sup> [http://www.tnstate.edu/about\\_tsu/history.aspx](http://www.tnstate.edu/about_tsu/history.aspx)

now include a Professional Science Masters in Applied Geospatial Sciences and a Master of Computer Science. Accreditations and reaffirmations of accreditations have been achieved in the various units, including public health, a first for TSU.

Applications for two newly created colleges have completed the first phase of approval and now await final approval from TBR. These are: (1) College of Physical and Life Sciences (STEM disciplines), and (2) elevate the Honors Program to an Honors College. Additionally, both alumni giving and Research and Sponsored programs are at record highs. TSU continues to increase its rankings in various evaluation agencies. <sup>viii</sup>

### **Benedict College**

Benedict College is a great institution founded in the 1870s by a black woman named Bathsheba Benedict. The original focus of the school was to educate those black persons recently freed of slavery. Throughout the years, the school has continued to evolve to meet the needs of the community. In its early days, the school mainly educated preachers, teachers, and later skilled tradesmen. Today the school has some of the most in-demand programs, "STEM, Cyber Security, Mass Communication, Sport Management, Business Administration, Engineering, Computer Science, Biology, and Education."<sup>ix</sup> The current President, Dr. Roslyn Clark Artis, is the 14<sup>th</sup> president of this fine institution and the first female. Under her leadership, the school has reduced its tuition by 26% and brings about many new programs to attract and retain well qualified new students. She also serves in multiple advisory and leadership roles nationally and locally, including being an advisor to the US Secretary of Homeland Security. Her progress at Benedict in just three short years is unparalleled.

### **Miles College**

Miles College was founded in 1898 as a private institution of higher learning in Alabama. Miles is one of the 15 institutions located in the state, which is the most held by any state. Miles College is the only 4-year institution in the Birmingham, AL area to be considered an HBCU. "Miles College is a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) higher learning institution. The college is one of only 39 HBCUs to have the designation of a United Negro College Fund (UNCF)

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<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.tnstate.edu/president/>

<sup>ix</sup> <https://www.benedict.edu/about-benedict/history/>

institution."<sup>x</sup> Miles currently offers 28 degrees over six schools and boasts an extensive and well-credentialed staff. They are also known for their extensive work in the Civil Rights Movement and commitment to all people's advancement and betterment. In 2019, Bobbie Knight became the 15<sup>th</sup> and first female President of Miles College. Knight is renowned for her business acumen and leadership skills. She has received countless awards and accolades for her work and philanthropy.<sup>xi</sup>

### Tuskegee University

Tuskegee University was founded in 1881 by Dr. Booker T. Washington in Tuskegee, AL. "Tuskegee University is an independent and state-related institution of higher education. Its programs serve a student body that is coeducational and racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse. With a strong orientation toward disciplines that highlight the relationship between education and workforce preparation in the sciences, professions, and technical areas, Tuskegee University also emphasizes the importance of the liberal arts as a foundation for successful careers in all areas. Accordingly, all academic majors stress the mastery of a required core of liberal arts courses."

The YARD recognized HBCU challenges and designed all programming to engage students, institutions, and industry leaders around creating solutions to these challenges. Participating institutions and select students were awarded scholarships, internships, and grants to help advance innovation, infrastructure, and inclusion.

- **Innovation:** HBCUs, both public and private, have suffered from a lack of investment from the federal government, states, and philanthropic entities as other institutions. Investments are needed to create environments where students can gather and talk about the big issues of today, tomorrow, and see the role they have to play in those issues. Spaces that are built on campus and in communities help promote innovation and creativity.
- **Infrastructure:** HBCUs in Alabama and across the country are working against the strong headwinds of serious financial struggles. A recent report estimates that 46-percent of all HBCU buildings are in need of repair or replacement. This is due to deferred maintenance, the evolution of higher education and technology, and the fact that many of these buildings are state or federal registered historic places.
- **Inclusion:** Despite accounting for 22% of today's college graduates, HBCUs remain an untapped talent pool. There is a need for new public-private investments in HBCUs to ensure future sustainability, the future career

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<sup>x</sup> <https://www.miles.edu/about>

prospects of students, as well as the advancement of diversity and inclusion in today's workforce.<sup>xii</sup>

**“We know that they have gifts but they're never going to realize them unless we create an environment for them to do some great things.”** Mayor Stephen Benjamin, Immediate Past President, US Conference of Mayors

## **Institution Perspective on Diversity and Inclusion**

HBCU institution leaders are faced with many challenges and opportunities. According to Benedict College President Rosilyn Artis, institution leaders have to reimagine education and re engage employer and investor communities of interest to bring them into the conversation about job opportunities and talent requirements.

**“We want to introduce our students to new companies and businesses that drive our economy in Columbia. This creates opportunities to dream and grow, and think about what they want to do, and how they want to contribute. That is the work we do. It's much more than reading, writing and arithmetic. It's about exposure, engagement, and being innovative and creative, and giving back to the communities we serve.”** Dr. Roslyn Artis, President, Benedict College

**“Alabama A&M University's acquisition of The YARD Grant is a ‘game changer’ for our institution because it provides financial and professional resources to invest in our students' success.”** Yvette Clayton, Director of Career Development Services, Alabama A&M University

**“We're going to place our students in the middle of ‘The YARD’ with the support systems that our students need to survive. And we will not speak to students simply from traditional trajectories of higher education, but we'll include inclusion, innovation and technology, and make sure students don't miss anything and grasp the full experience by being on the yard.”** George French, former president of Miles College

According to the World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report, diversity and inclusion in the workforce is essential to innovation, customer loyalty and brand awareness, and global competitiveness.<sup>xiii</sup> Companies that seek to attract and retain diverse talent are places with strong leadership, commitment to action, and employee empowerment. Now, more than ever, companies need strategies and best

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<sup>xii</sup> ‘HBCU Partnership Challenge’, HBCU Caucus, <http://anitab.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/HBCU-Partnership-Challenge.pdf>

<sup>xiii</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/10/why-diversity-matters-for-global-competitiveness/>



practices for attracting, recruiting, and retaining diverse talent to remain competitive for generations to come.

The YARD collected industry perspectives from leaders. Below are sample comments from a few including: Vulcan Materials, LinkedIn, Southern Company, BBVA USA, ULTA, LinkedIn, and Liquid Soul.

**In order for Vulcan to remain successful, it's important that we readjust our recruitment strategy. The hbcu talent base is an area that we have not fully utilized, Our efforts now are to align with that population so we're getting the best from those universities to come on board, and prepare them to help with the success we see for Vulcan for the future."** Darren Hicks, VP of Human Resources, Vulcan Materials Company

**"The relative success or failure of any business comes down to its people. As the head of the bank's Talent & Culture unit in the U.S., I feel this acutely and take great pride in leading BBVA's efforts to foster a best in class workforce."** Rosilyn Houston, SEVP and Chief Talent & Culture Executive, BBVA USA

**"We know that strong leadership and culture are part of ensuring things keep moving forward, but we need to focus on how important it is that we embrace technology for engaging the next generation."** Chris Womack, EVP & President External Affairs, The Southern Company

John Hudson, EVP & Chief External & Public Affairs Officer for Southern Company Gas said, **"My time on the hill at Alabama A&M University prepared me with an education and a confidence that I would not have received in any other culture."**

Terrell Whitely, a graduate of Florida A&M University and President of Liquid Soul one of the nation's largest African American PR firms specializing in entertainment said **"no where else will you find a community of connectors and enablers like HBCUs that build character and lifelong relationships."**

Crystal Banks, Director of Diversity and Inclusion for ULTA Beauty, said ULTA is working at redefining what beauty means, from a diversity and inclusion aspect. **"We really do feel a responsibility to shape how the world sees and experiences beauty. We feature a 10-week paid internship each year, offering students hands-on experience aligned with their career goals."**

**"This is an opportunity to build partnerships with HBCUs around the country in our footprint that help build stronger communities, build stronger institutions, and provide workforce development opportunities for our company and other organizations in ways that maybe we haven't thought about creatively.**

**“As head of diversity and inclusion, I’m looking at this from the inside lens. How do we transform the environment at LI not only from access and entry but how are we retaining talent so diverse talent thrives in tech.”** Rosanna Durruthy, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, LinkedIn

**“When we think about HBCUs and the talent coming out, they need pipelines and to see what they don’t know. It’s our job to harness their talent and growth, and ensure they’re part of our new workforce of the future.”** Aarti Tandon, Executive Director, Smart Cities New York and Atlanta

Millennials and Gen Zs want all of the talk businesses give purpose to result in meaningful action, and for business leaders to serve as agents for positive change. They expect business to enhance lives and provide livelihoods, but they don’t see enough businesses standing up and filling the void. By ensuring that strategy incorporates plans to meet societal needs and acknowledging the personal and societal concerns about which millennials and Gen Zs care most, businesses can re-engage younger generations and inspire loyalty.

The YARD student winners from HBCUs shared their experience and value they received through participation and scholarships.

Justin Lindberg, an AAMU junior majoring in computer science, was selected as the first-place winner for his parking app idea that assists drivers with parking. **“The YARD is an influential organization that has provided me with an outlet for my innovative passions and is spreading a positive message at HBCUs.”**

Derrick Sanders, a TSU sophomore majoring in english, was selected as a first-place winner for his financial services app for students. **“The YARD provides an opportunity for young entrepreneurs like me to brand themselves. Students can become who they want to be while surrounding themselves with individuals who are true investors in not only your idea, but in you.”**

Annastacia Hammond, a Benedict sophomore majoring in electrical engineering with a minor in cyber security was also selected as a first-place winner at her school for a career coaching program that connects experienced mentors with high school and college students. **“The YARD provides students with an opportunity to share their innovative ideas with their community. Thanks to The YARD’s partnership with Vulcan Materials, I see change being made with a positive impact on students, schools, and our community.”**

Zekari Gordon, an Alabama State senior majoring in biology, was selected as first place for his idea to help HBCUs become green and secure additional revenue with

a ride share program. **“I think The YARD is wonderful. To be able to speak with entrepreneurs and colleges is amazing. No only that, but The YARD helps current college students find internships and jobs. It’s a great opportunity to go explore and try new things.”**

Diversity is also important on a wider scale, beyond the company level. For example, diversity and inclusion can be linked to higher levels of business success at a city level. The [Open For Business report](#) sponsored by Accenture examined the extent to which global cities are open, progressive and competitive. The research established a link between diversity and inclusion and economic competitiveness on a global scale. The city ratings show that diversity and inclusion is a common denominator among leading cities with a strong global economic footprint.

**“Alabama’s fifteen Historically Black Colleges and Universities are integral to our world-class university system. Despite enrolling roughly 300,000 students each year nationwide, HBCUs have faced significant funding challenges, with some even forced to close their doors.”** Alabama Senator Doug Jones

**“Cities and metropolitan economies represent 85 percent of all the people who live in this country. 89 percent of all jobs are in cities. 91 percent of America’s trillion dollar gross domestic product is created in cities. We play an important role in driving the prosperity of America, and advancing inclusion to ensure that everyone has a seat at the table.”** Mayor Stephen Benjamin, Immediate Past President, US Conference of Mayors

**“We’re trying to be creative and innovative in strategies to help our universities grow and expand. In New Orleans, we spend millions on marketing to attract people to our city but haven’t played to our strength and helped universities with marketing. We’re excited about the opportunities to learn from The YARD and get takeaways for our students to help build a more diverse workforce and community.”** Mayor LaToya Cantrell, City of New Orleans

**“As we look at the challenges we’re facing in our cities, what’s old is new. What I hope to take back to Atlanta is a renewed sense of purpose and best practices on diversity and inclusion from across the country.”** Mayor Keisha Bottoms, City of Atlanta