



U-CAN HBCU Recruitment Fair Toolkit



U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Table of Contents

	Click on QR Codes to the HBCU Experience! Information, Data, and More.....	3
1.	How to Navigate the Transition from High School to College	4
2.	What Are Degrees and Certificates?	8
3.	What to Expect at College Orientation	12
4.	What It Is, And What It Isn't: The Gap Year	16
5.	Historically Black Colleges and Universities	21
6.	What Are HBCUs and Why Are They Important?	23
7.	History of HBCUs	25
8.	The History of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)	28
9.	Why Are HBCUs Still Significant Today?	30
10.	How Many HBCUs Are There in the United States?	32
11.	14 Things to Expect as An HBCU Student	34
12.	Five Common Characteristics of Hispanic Students Attending HBCUs	37
13.	The Influx of Latino Students at Historically Black Colleges	40
14.	At some HBCUs, enrollment rises from surprising applicants	44
15.	Ten Reason to Attend an Historically Black College/University (HBCU) or Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)	47
16.	Joining The Military as An Officer	50
17.	Being A Military Officer Commissioned Vs. Non-Commissioned Officers	53
18.	Frequently Asked Questions About Scholarships	55
19.	How Do You Talk to Your Parents About Paying for College?	59
20.	How Can You Find and Apply for Scholarships?	62

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit



UNCF (United Negro College Fund) THE HBCU RESOURCE GUIDE

https://uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021-K-12-HBCU-Resource-Guide_2021-rev.pdf

HBCUs Make America Strong: THE POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?



Thurgood Marshall HBCU Member Schools

<https://www.tmcf.org/about-us/member-schools/>



Easy Scholarships That You Can Apply to Right Now!



<https://getschooled.com/journey/succeed-in-college/scholarships-for-college/easy-scholarships-that-you-can-apply-to-right-now/>



HBCU Today (Second Edition)

http://www.hbcutoday.net/pdf/HBCUToday_DigitalEdition.pdf



<https://hbcuconnect.com/colleges/>



BestColleges.com



<https://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/black-student-scholarships/>

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/white-enrollment-is-increasing-at-hbcus/>

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

1. How to Navigate the Transition from High School to College

Last updated June 21, 2023

Congratulations on making the transition from high school to college! This is a big step in your life, and it's completely normal to feel both excited and nervous about what's to come. As you navigate this transition, it's important to be aware of the differences in support between high school and college, as well as the challenges you may face along the way.

Recognize that the support you received in high school may not be the same as the support you receive in college

In high school, you may have had a support system that included parents, teachers, counselors, and other adults who were there to guide you through your academic and personal growth. In college, however, you may need to be more proactive in seeking out support. Here are some tips to help you get started on building your own support system in college:

Social support is also critical, so identify who your support network will be in college

Whether that's family members, friends, or campus resources like the counseling center or cultural clubs.

Attend orientation and welcome events

Most colleges and universities offer [orientation programs for new students](#). These events are a great opportunity to meet other students, learn about campus resources, and get a sense of what college life is like. Make sure to attend as many of these events as possible and take advantage of the opportunities to ask questions and connect with others.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Join a student organization!

Joining a student organization is a great way to meet other students with similar interests and to build a sense of community on campus. Whether you're interested in sports, politics, or the arts, there's likely a student organization that aligns with your interests.

Connect with other students

Building a network of [supportive friends](#) and classmates can be one of the most valuable resources you have in college. Make an effort to connect with others in your classes or simply strike up a conversation with someone. Connect with people in your dorm, or in social areas where students hang out.

One of the biggest differences between high school and college is the level of independence expected of you

In college, you will be responsible for managing your time, keeping up with your coursework, and making important decisions about your future. This can be a major culture shock for [first-generation students](#) who may not have the same level of familiarity with the college experience as their peers.

Take advantage of academic resources

Many colleges and universities offer [academic resources](#) like tutoring, study groups, and writing centers. These resources can be especially helpful [if you're struggling with a particular course or assignment](#).

Talk to your professors

Your professors are a valuable resource for academic support and advice. Don't be afraid to ask questions, [attend office hours](#), or reach out via email if you need help with a course.

Develop strategies for managing stress and staying on track academically

This may include setting goals, using [time management techniques](#), and asking those close to you for help with staying accountable for deadlines.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Identify the resources you have at hand to help transition to college successfully

Try using [the 4 S's of transition](#):

1. **Situation:** First, take a step back and assess the situation. What is going on in your life right now, and what challenges do you anticipate facing in college?
2. **Self:** Next, think about how your personal characteristics, such as your gender, race, or socioeconomic background, may impact your relation to the new setting based on your lived experience. This can help you develop a better understanding of your own needs and strengths.
3. **Social Support:** Now, think about what social supports you currently have access to, particularly when you are in need of help.
4. **Strategies:** Lastly, consider what coping strategies you know of, and use. Can you find ways to creatively manage your stress and anxiety in this new environment? If not, what do you need to accomplish this?

Remember that everyone's experience of transition is unique, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. However, by paying attention to these 4 S's, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of their own needs and resources and create a plan for success in their new situation.

Acknowledge that homesickness may be unavoidable

Homesickness is a common experience for many college students, especially those who are leaving home for the first time or attending a school far from their hometown. One of the best ways to combat homesickness is to stay connected with family and friends back home. Maintaining communication with family and community back home may keep you close to valuable support and advice and can help hold you accountable as you adjust to college life.

Here are some tips for staying connected:

- **Schedule regular phone calls or video chats.** Try to schedule regular phone calls, video chats, or send postcards with family and friends back home.
- **Share your new experiences!** One of the best ways to stay connected with loved ones is to share your experiences with them. Share photos and stories from your new life on campus and ask them to do the same.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

- **Try to plan visits home or to visit loved ones during breaks from school.** Knowing that you have a visit with family or friends on the horizon can be a great motivator and help you feel less homesick.
- **Connect with other students.** Building a supportive network of friends and classmates on campus can also help combat homesickness. Attend social events, join clubs or organizations, and reach out to others in your classes to build new connections and friendships.

It can take time to adjust to a new environment, so be patient with yourself, and try not to isolate or withdraw from social connections and opportunities. If you're feeling overwhelmed or struggling to manage your homesickness, consider reaching out to a counselor or mental health professional for support. Remember you have people rooting for you and your success, you've got this!

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

2. What Are Degrees and Certificates?

For most good careers, you'll need *at least some* college. How much college you'll need depends on [the career you want](#). You might finish in months or years. You might take classes in just [your major](#). You might also take General Education (GE) classes that can be useful for a lot of careers. One path isn't better than another. The trick is finding the right path to meet your goals.

Let's start with some basics! Click the links below to learn about the different options.

- [Certificates.](#)
- [Associate Degrees.](#)
- [Bachelor's Degrees.](#)
- [Graduate or Professional Degrees.](#)
- [Other Training Options.](#)

Certificates

If you want to launch your career quickly, a certificate is a good way to go. You can get a certificate at a [two-year college](#). A community college is your best bet. Think twice about getting a certificate from a [for-profit college](#).

Here are some key facts about certificates.

- You can usually finish in six months to a year.
- They're practical and hands-on. You'll learn skills for a specific career.
- You won't have to take extra math, English, or GE classes.

Here are just a few examples of careers you can go into with a certificate.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

- Automotive technician.
- Early childhood education specialist.
- Medical assistant.

A certificate isn't the same thing as certification.

For some careers, you must pass an exam to get a license or certification. For example, realtors must pass a real estate exam. Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) must pass the CNA exam. Some certificate programs can help you get ready for an exam. They won't take the place of the exam.

Associate Degrees

Associate degrees take a little longer than certificate programs. Sometimes, they're called two-year degrees because you get them at a [two-year college](#).

Here are some key facts about associate degrees.

- They take about two years if you're a full-time student. Your college counselor can help you make a plan to finish on time.
- They go into more depth than a certificate program. You'll take both GE and [major](#) classes.
- You can stop after you earn your associate degree if that's all you need for your career.
- You can also transfer to a four-year college to finish the last two years of a bachelor's degree.
 - Learn about the [Associate Degree for Transfer \(ADT\)](#) program.

Here are just a few examples of careers you can go into with an associate degree.

- Advertising manager.
- Dental hygienist.
- Paralegal.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Bachelor's Degrees

For a lot of careers, you'll need at least a bachelor's degree. You can earn **up to \$1 million more** in your lifetime if you get one. Sometimes, bachelor's degrees are called four-year degrees because you get them at a [four-year college](#). A few California Community Colleges (CCCs) offer [bachelor's degrees for in-demand careers](#).

Here are some key facts about bachelor's degrees.

- They take about four years if you're a full-time student. If you change majors or don't have a solid plan, it could take longer.
 - California State University (CSU) [pledge programs](#) can help you finish on time.
- You'll take both GE and [major](#) classes. Your major classes will go into more depth than an associate degree program.
- You can [transfer from a two-year college](#) to finish up your bachelor's degree. You'll already have most of your GE classes out of the way.

Here are just a few examples of careers you can go into with a bachelor's degree.

- Accountant.
- Computer programmer.
- Mechanical engineer.

Graduate or Professional Degrees

For some careers, you'll need more than a bachelor's degree. Master's degrees and doctorates are the most common graduate and professional degrees. Public school teachers need a teaching credential. You usually get them at larger [four-year colleges](#). There are some schools that only offer graduate degrees.

Here are some key facts about graduate and professional degrees.

- You'll need a bachelor's degree first.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

- A teaching credential usually takes about a year and a half. A master's degree takes about two years. A doctorate can take four to six years.
- You'll take advanced classes in your [major](#). Many programs also give you hands-on experience in your field.

Here are just a few examples of careers you can go into with a graduate or professional degree.

- Lawyer.
- Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT).
- Physician.

Other Training Options.

College can open a lot of doors. It's a great choice for many students. If you're not sure college is for you, there are other paths you can explore.

- Learn how [apprenticeships](#) or [the military](#) can train you for a great career.

Sources:

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/college-101/quick-guide-your-college-degree-options><https://www.bls.gov/cps/certifications-and-licenses-faqs.htm#whatare><https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/the-college-payoff/>

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

3. What to Expect at College Orientation

Last updated April 11, 2023

Your first official act as a college student is to attend student orientation! Whether you are headed to a community college or a four-year college this fall, attending freshman orientation gets you all set up to transition to college. We get that the idea of spending time with total strangers in a new place can be overwhelming - but trust us, this time is the best way to adjust to your new life as a college student. To help you prepare for orientation, here's a list of things to expect:

Registering for classes

During orientation you will most likely have the opportunity to register for courses for your first quarter or semester. Depending on the size of your school, you might even have a designated time to [meet with your academic advisor](#) to discuss your overall academic plan. Don't worry if you're unsure of what you want to study - you have plenty of time to figure it out! It is helpful, however, to note specific classes or majors that interest you. Your advisor can then help you explore classes and major programs, and then get you registered for classes. If you do have a set time to meet with your advisor, be sure to check beforehand to make sure there aren't any holds (like unpaid balances) that will prevent you from registering. This will make meeting with your advisor go by much smoother and faster! You can find out if you have any holds by talking to someone at your school's financial aid or admissions office. Whether you register for classes on your own or alongside an advisor, you will leave orientation prepared to start classes your first quarter or semester!

Making friends at college orientation

College orientation is the perfect place to begin getting to know your peers and make new connections. Putting yourself out there and making new friends at orientation can feel scary and overwhelming, but remember: everyone there is likely feeling the same way as you!

During orientation, you'll be able to connect with people who might be from your same city or state, have declared your same major, or will live in the same

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

residence hall as you. Don't worry if making the first move to talk to someone sounds intimidating - orientation leaders will facilitate activities and games to help you make connections and get to know people organically. You will also tour your campus, eat together, and do other social activities together. You can kind of think of it as summer camp for college students!

Most schools have current students serve as orientation leaders. They can help you gain insight into what attending your new school is like, what the best classes to take are, what clubs you can join, and more. Don't be afraid to ask your orientation leaders any questions as they come up. These are your peers now, and they're there to help!

Once orientation is over, be sure to learn [where else you can make friends on campus your freshman year!](#)

Getting connected to the college system

Despite the fun you're going to have meeting new people and participating in group activities, you will have to do some logistical things at orientation. During this time, you will take all the steps necessary to become an enrolled student, like getting your student ID card, submitting outstanding information for your student account, logging into your school's web portal, and taking your placement tests for math, science, and language classes (if required). If you have any questions about these processes, talk to one of your orientation leaders or someone in the admissions office!

Exploring campus resources

As a college student, you will have access to [tons of resources](#) on your college campus, such as learning assistance programs, cultural centers, career services, the library, and more. All of these services are typically covered by your tuition, which means they're free to use, and you can use them as often as you need! While you're attending orientation, make sure you pay close attention to what resources your school offers and how to start using them when you start classes.

Learning about student life

While there are great academic and professional resources available to you on campus, there's also a lot of resources for students to have fun, decompress, and

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

meet new people! At orientation, you may learn about the following aspects of student life:

- Clubs and groups. There will likely be many clubs available on your campus, varying widely in interest. Enjoy reading? Have a passion for volunteering? Love playing video games? There's a place for you! Ask your orientation leaders what the best clubs to join at your school are, and if there's a club you're interested in that doesn't exist, make it yourself!
- Events and concerts. There's usually always something happening on a college campus - you just have to know where to find it! Ask anyone in your orientation group if they know of Facebook groups dedicated to advertising campus activities at your school. You can join the group and find a great club event, concert, or party!
- Study abroad programs. While students typically don't study abroad until they're upperclassmen, you can still explore different programs early! Many schools have an office or department dedicated to studying abroad, so ask your orientation leaders where to find it, and head there once classes start to learn about the study abroad programs available through your school. They can walk you through the application and financial aid process associated with these kinds of programs.

Getting to know the community

Whether you are staying local or moving away for college, you will be entering a new community, so it's important to take the time to get to know it. During orientation, you might have the time to explore off-campus to get to know your community more in-depth. This is the perfect opportunity to try a new restaurant, explore popular coffee spots, and see what more there is to offer around town. This community is where you'll be spending the next few years of your life, so start exploring early!

What to expect at parent and family orientation

College orientation isn't just for students! Most colleges also have a separate parent and family orientation where your family can learn about the resources your college has to offer. This is a chance for your family to learn about topics like [financial aid](#), student life, and other resources like tutoring and mental health services. Depending on the college, families can also meet with faculty and staff.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

If you're a [first-gen student](#) (aka the first in your family to go to college), parent and family orientation is especially helpful for your family - it can help them get a better understanding of what the college experience is like and how to best support you during your time there.

If your college doesn't offer a parent and family orientation, consider bringing them with you to an event or two at your student orientation! Whether or not you're a first gen student, having the support of a trusted family member with you can help ease your nerves as you prepare to transition to college. This is a new and exciting journey for them too, and they want to be able to support you!

Need some support as you transition into college? We're here for you! [Just text #Hello to 33-55-77](#) to chat with one of our advisors. If you're using a mobile device, [click here to have the text message set up for you!](#)

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

4. WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT ISN'T: THE GAP YEAR

IS A GAP YEAR A GOOD IDEA? START BY UNDERSTANDING WHAT A GAP YEAR IS AND WHAT IT ISN'T.

While taking a gap year has been popular in Europe and Commonwealth countries for some time, having a break between high school and college is less prevalent in the United States. Tracking exactly how many students choose to take a gap year is difficult. However, the Denver Gap Year Association, a chapter of the Gap Year Association, estimates "[less than 5% of the student population in the United States embrace the idea.](#)"

Many [benefits are associated with gap years for high school students](#) (or college students and graduates). But for those considering the gap year alternative, knowing more than just your options is essential. It's also important to understand what a gap year *IS* and what it *ISN'T*.

Let's explore gap year do's and don'ts.

WHAT IS A GAP YEAR?

According to the [Gap Year Association](#), a gap year is roughly defined as:

"A semester or year of experiential learning, typically taken after high school and [before] career or post-secondary education, [to] deepen one's practical, professional, and personal awareness."

What that looks like is different for each individual. A gap year could be a break taken between high school and college, before or after the military, during college, or even after college graduation. There's no set age to take a gap year or how long it should be.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Some people take a gap year when they are 17 or 18 years old after high school graduation while deciding their next steps. Others take a gap year at 24 to explore their personal and professional interests before entering the workforce. And despite the name, a gap *year* can last more or less than 12 months.

This flexibility is a significant benefit of the gap year experience.

WHAT TO DO DURING A GAP YEAR

How to spend a gap year varies significantly, too. Some opt to participate in a structured gap year program. [Learn more about gap year ideas, programs, and resources here.](#)

Others opt for study abroad programs, working, traveling, or volunteering. What you do during your gap year depends on your personal goals and how that time spent outside of the classroom will help get you closer to achieving them. Here are our tips for things to do during a gap year.

#1. MAKE IT MEANINGFUL AND HAVE A GOAL IN MIND

Far from being an option for the directionless, intentional gap years provide the ideal opportunity for self-exploration, expanding your horizons, and gaining diverse experiences. Make your time purposeful. To get the most benefit from this time, start by thinking about what you hope you achieve and your long-term goals.

No matter what your interests are, your gap year should align with them. A gap year doesn't delay your future. It should enhance it. Reflect on your short and long-term goals. These don't need to be overly specific.

What kind of life do you want to lead? Where do you want to live? What sort of work do you want to do? From there, research gap year options that align with your vision. Choosing a gap year focus related to your overall goals will make it a rewarding and impactful experience.

For example, if you're unsure what you'd like to study in college, consider a gap year program after high school that is associated with your academic and career interests. Or, if you're passionate about a hobby such as fitness or giving back to

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

the community, you should look for opportunities to gain more experience. Maybe this means starting a blog, getting entrepreneurial by establishing a small business or even volunteering abroad.

#2. USE THE TIME FOR SELF-EXPLORATION, TOO

This is a variation on making your gap year meaningful. However, the importance of using the gap year for self-exploration cannot be overstated.

In [The Gap Year Advantage](#) by Karl Haigler and Rae Nelson, the authors studied 280 gap-year students and found that young people who took time off had better interpersonal skills. They also found that these students had a “less-selfish” approach to working with people and careers, ultimately leading to increased long-term job satisfaction.

By taking a gap year, you’re consciously choosing to invest your most valuable resource, your time, in yourself. Use this time to learn more about your interests, how you relate to others, and develop a better understanding of your likes and dislikes. It will pay dividends in the future.

#3. HAVE A PLAN FOR AFTER YOUR GAP YEAR

While planning to make your gap year impactful, you should also consider what you’d like to do after your gap year. This may change as you grow and experience more. Nonetheless, having a plan for after the gap year will help you focus on reaping the benefits of a “year off” and not stressing about your next move.

For example, if you are planning to go to college after your gap year, you can still apply before your gap year and defer enrollment. Deferment rules vary somewhat between institutions, and you will likely have to account for how you spend your time.

However, you may be able to earn college credit for the activities completed during your gap year! So, do your research!

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

WHAT NOT TO DO ON YOUR GAP YEAR

There are ways to plan for a successful and rewarding year away from academia. Similarly, there are some common pitfalls and misconceptions to weigh. Here's what a gap year is *not*.

GAP YEAR MYTH:

The gap year is for people who lack direction.

Taking time off before your next educational or career move is not a way to simply "opt out" of adulting. And it's definitely not an all-inclusive holiday in your parents' basement.

Instead, a gap year should be intentional. A clear idea of what you want to accomplish, how you're going to accomplish it, and why you're doing it will help others buy into your plan. It demonstrates that you see this as an opportunity for growth, not a vacation.

GAP YEAR MYTH:

Taking a gap year limits your academic and career options.

Many detractors mistakenly believe that gap years negatively affect future academic success and employability. However, studies indicate that this is false.

One [American University study](#) found that [60% of polled gap year participants said they took their education more seriously due to their experiences](#). Further, the same survey found that 23% of gap-year students got better grades than those who went directly to college.

Similarly, it is untrue that taking a gap year inhibits employability and career prospects. The Gap Year Association reports that [88% of students who took time off report higher than average career satisfaction](#). There's also no correlation between

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

taking a gap year and unemployment. In fact, gap year experiences help [build a young person's resume](#) and can even give them a leg up over peers.

SHOULD I TAKE A GAP YEAR?

Whether or not to take time away before launching into a career or educational pursuits is a personal decision. However, it is a viable option that offers many benefits when done with intentionality. Knowing what a gap year is and what it isn't is a crucial part of this.

Do your research, understand your options, and think about what you hope to gain. As you do so, here are some resources we recommend exploring.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

5. Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Question:

What data do you have on historically Black colleges and universities in the United States?

Response:

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are institutions that were established prior to 1964 with the principal mission of educating Black Americans ([source](#)). These institutions were founded and developed in an environment of legal segregation and, by providing access to higher education, they contributed substantially to the progress Black Americans made in improving their status ([source](#)).

In 2021, there were 99 HBCUs located in 19 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Of the 99 HBCUs, 50 were public institutions and 49 were private nonprofit institutions ([source](#)). The number of HBCU students increased by 47 percent (from 223,000 to 327,000 students) between 1976 and 2010, then decreased by 12 percent (to 287,000 students) between 2010 and 2021 ([source](#)). In comparison, the number of students in all degree-granting institutions increased 91 percent (from 11 million to 21 million students) between 1976 and 2010, then decreased 11 percent (to 19 million students) between 2010 and 2021 ([source](#)).

Although HBCUs were originally founded to educate Black students, they enroll students of other races as well. The composition of HBCUs has changed over time. In 2021, non-Black students made up 25 percent of enrollment at HBCUs, compared with 15 percent in 1976 ([source](#)).¹

While Black enrollment at HBCUs increased by 14 percent between 1976 and 2021, the total number of Black students enrolled in all degree-granting postsecondary institutions (both HBCUs and non-HBCUs) more than doubled during this period. As a result, the percentage of Black students enrolled at HBCUs fell from 18 percent in 1976 to 8 percent in 2014 and then increased to 9 percent in 2021. ([source](#), [source](#), and [source](#)).

Female enrollment at HBCUs has been higher than male enrollment in every year since 1976. The percentage of female enrollment at HBCUs increased from 53

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

percent in 1976 to 64 percent in 2021. Also in 2021, some 88 percent of HBCU students attended 4-year institutions, while the remaining 12 percent attended 2-year institutions. About 76 percent of HBCU students attended public institutions, while the remaining 24 percent attended private nonprofit institutions ([source](#)).

In academic year 2020–21, some 48,200 degrees were conferred by HBCUs: 10 percent were associate's degrees, more than two-thirds were bachelor's degrees (70 percent), 14 percent were master's degrees, and 6 percent were doctor's degrees. Of the degrees conferred by HBCUs, the majority (74 percent) were conferred to Black students. Black students earned 43 percent of the 5,000 associate's degrees, 80 percent of the 33,600 bachelor's degrees, 72 percent of the 6,900 master's degrees, and 60 percent of the 2,700 doctor's degrees conferred by HBCUs in 2020–21. Of all degrees conferred by HBCUs to Black students, more than two-thirds were conferred to female students (69 percent). ([source](#)).

Of all the bachelor's and master's degrees conferred to Black students, the percentage conferred by HBCUs has decreased over time. For example, HBCUs conferred 35 percent of the bachelor's degrees and 21 percent of the master's degrees Black students earned in 1976–77, compared with 13 and 5 percent, respectively, in 2020–21 ([source](#), [source](#), [source](#), and [source](#)). Additionally, the percentage of Black doctor's degree recipients who received their degrees from HBCUs was lower in 2020–21 (10 percent) than in 1976–77 (14 percent) ([source](#), [source](#), and [source](#)).

The total revenue for HBCUs in 2020–21 was \$12.4 billion, with \$1.8 billion from student tuition and fees. Total expenditures were \$8.8 billion, of which \$2.2 billion was spent on instruction ([source](#)).

¹Data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Prior to 2010, IPEDS required institutions to report all students as belonging to a single racial/ethnic group (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian/Alaska Native). From 1992 to 2009, under this single-choice design, the percentage of non-Black students fluctuated between 17 and 18 percent. Beginning in 2010, IPEDS asks institutions to separately report students of single racial/ethnic backgrounds and those of two or more races. Since this reporting change, students reported as Two or more races have been included in the percentage of non-Black students. Although students reported as Two or more races may be Black (and another race), it is not possible to determine that with the available data.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

6. What Are HBCUs and Why Are They Important?

Historically Black colleges and universities, or HBCUs, offer valuable educational opportunities to a variety of students. These educational institutions create unique communities with an emphasis on culture and history. If you're considering a college or university for your undergraduate or graduate studies, an HBCU might just be the right fit, but it's important to understand the details of these unique schools. From answering the question, "What is an HBCU?" to discuss where you can find these schools, this page will cover all the important details.

What Is a Historically Black College and University (HBCU)?

What are HBCUs? HBCUs are schools established expressly to serve the educational needs of Black Americans. Prior to the time of their establishment, there was no structured higher education system for Black students. The first HBCU was founded in 1837. HBCUs were born out of a time when Black students were barred from attending traditional colleges and universities due to segregation. Now, HBCUs educate a racially diverse student body and offer a rich cultural history to their students.

HBCUs not only offer students a quality education but also culture and history. They work to foster appreciation of Black culture and help to prepare students for successful careers and lives after graduation. HBCUs are designed to give students opportunities that they might not have elsewhere because of financial or educational hardship.

[HBCU degree options](#) vary. Many HBCU bachelor's degree options include a focus on STEM subjects, like biological sciences, physical sciences, and agricultural science. Just like traditional schools, you can also pursue an HBCU master's degree program or even online courses at an HBCU.

Attending a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) vs HBCU

There are both pros and cons to attending a predominantly white institution (PWI) compared to attending an HBCU. Understanding the differences between a PWI and an HBCU may help you to determine which type of school is better for you.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Both types of institutions offer quality education opportunities, groups, organizations and social groups like sororities and fraternities. However, the institutions are significantly different when it comes to the types of communities they create and even social and racial tensions. Educational inequalities can still be present in PWIs, and students may have to deal with microaggressions and negative stereotypes.

There isn't a simple answer as to which type of institution is right for you. Instead, it's important to consider your education goals and the type of environment and community in which you want to study.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

7. History of HBCUs

The history of historically Black colleges and universities begins in the 19th century. John Chavis became the first Black American on record to attend college when he was admitted to Washington and Lee University in 1799, but such an event was rare. For Black students, there were few to no opportunities to access a higher education. Both public and private institutes of higher education excluded Black students.

In 1837, Quaker philanthropist Richard Humphreys established the first HBCU, now known as Cheyney University in Pennsylvania. Its goal was to teach Black American students the skills they would need for employment. This school's establishment was a milestone for Black education, and additional schools followed.

Black churches, supported by the American Missionary Association and Freedmen's Bureau, were responsible for establishing some of the first colleges for Black students. The second Morrill Act of 1890 further helped support the establishment of Black colleges by requiring states to offer land grants to establish schools for Black students who weren't allowed to attend other schools within the states. This act resulted in the foundation of many HBCUs.

HBCUs have faced many challenges. They've survived issues like limited funding, accreditation challenges and even the Jim Crow laws. However, these schools have endured and continue to offer education and opportunities today not only to Black students but to all students.

Origin of Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The origin of HBCUs can be traced back to the goal of giving Black students educational opportunities that they couldn't access anywhere else. After Richard Humphreys founded the first HBCU in the country in 1837, others followed suit. The Miner Normal School in Washington, D.C., Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and Wilberforce in Ohio were all founded in the 1850s.

From 1865 to 1900, HBCUs saw significant growth. The growth was greatest in 1867, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation, when nine HBCUs were founded in a single year.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

The foundation of HBCUs continued for more than a century, with schools like the J.F. Drake State Technical College, University of the Virgin Islands and Southern University at Shreveport were established in the 1960s.

Today, HBCUs encompass a large variety of classifications, including public, private, denominational, liberal arts and land-grant universities. They range in size and enrollment, from fewer than 300 students to more than 11,000 students.

Legacy of HBCUs

What is the biggest HBCU? By enrollment, North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro is the largest HBCU, with more than 12,000 students. Florida A&M University and Howard University are the next largest schools. While a large school can certainly have an impressive legacy, all HBCUs have contributed to important and notable accomplishments and graduated well-known alumni.

HBCUs have established an impressive legacy. HBCU alumni include many famous public figures:

- W.E.B. Du Bois, Fisk University
- Ralph Ellison, Tuskegee University
- Martin Luther King Jr., Morehouse College
- Thurgood Marshall, Howard University
- Ruth Simmons, Dillard University
- Oprah Winfrey, Tennessee State University
- Mo'Nique, Morgan State University
- Lionel Richie, Tuskegee University
- Spike Lee, Morehouse College
- Jennifer Hudson, Langston University

On January 3, 2019, [North Carolina Representative Alma Adams spoke out in support of HBCUs](#) saying that despite only educating 10% of Black college students, HBCUs support:

- 27% of all Black American STEM graduates
- 40% of all Black American engineers
- 50% of all Black American lawyers
- 50% of all Black American public-school teachers
- 80% of all Black American judges

Representative Adams is an alumna of North Carolina A&T State University.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

The Black College Football Hall of Fame announced the HBCU Legacy Bowl in March of 2021. This Legacy Bowl is a postseason game that will take place at Tulane University. It will be held the Saturday after the Super Bowl and will feature NFL draft-eligible HBCU football players.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

8. The History of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

By [Hilary Cairns](#) Last updated on December 22, 2022

Each school that is considered an HBCU (or Historically Black Colleges and Universities) has a long history in the United States. Over a hundred colleges are HBCU's, with the first-ever being nearly two hundred years old. Here's a quick history of these colleges and how HBCUs began.

What is an HBCU?

HBCUs began with the Higher Education Act of 1965. It was passed and defined an HBCU as being "...any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the [education of black Americans](#), and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary [of Education] to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation."

The South established most HBCU colleges after the Civil War. However, some existed prior.

What was the First HBCU?

Richard Humphreys established the first HBCU, [Cheyney University of Pennsylvania](#), in 1837. Humphreys originally named the school the African Institute, which then changed to the Institute for Colored Youth a few months later. He left money to begin a school that would bring higher education opportunities to African Americans.

The first classes at Cheyney University focused on trades and agriculture. Now, the university offers opportunities to Philadelphia inner-city students.

Since 1837

With over 100 HBCU's in the country, several colleges popped up after 1837. That includes [Lincoln University of Pennsylvania](#) in 1854, the first HBCU granting college degrees, the [Wilberforce University](#) in 1856, the first college run by African

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

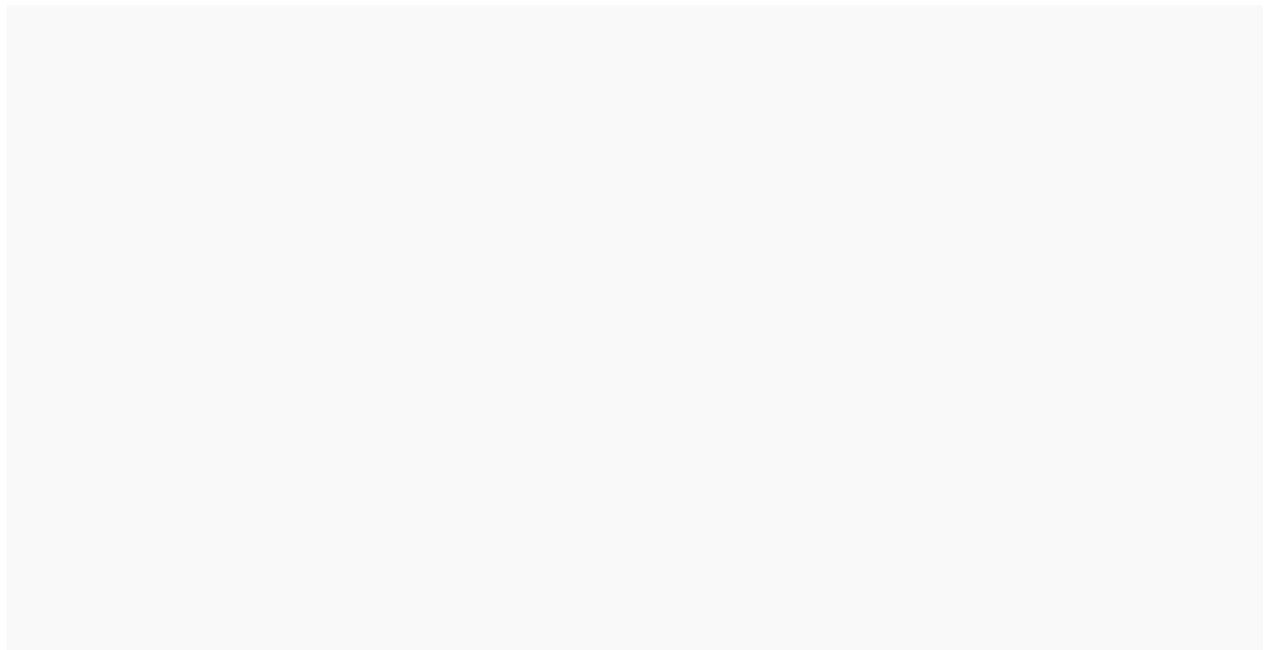
Americans, and [Harris-Stowe State University](#) in 1857, which focused on teaching and education courses.

[Shaw University in North Carolina](#) would become the first HBCU to come about after the Civil War. The American Missionary Association and the Freedmen's Bureau founded many other historically black colleges. Even more would come about due to the second Morrill Act in 1890. It required states to give land grants to institutions to admit black students. However, it was only if there wasn't another local option that didn't take race into account for admissions.

Since the Civil Rights laws passed in the 1960's, schools receiving federal funding take affirmative action into account when accepting students. However, many HBCUs now actually have non-black majorities including [West Virginia State University](#) and [Bluefield State College](#).

Many notable names attended HBCUs including Martin Luther King Jr., Oprah Winfrey, Michael Strahan, Thurgood Marshall, and the Tuskegee Airmen.

All HBCUs have an extensive history in the United States as they all had to be founded before 1864. Historically Black Colleges and Universities steep in their own history of laws, civil rights, and the Civil War. Some of the colleges that are [considered the best HBCUs](#) include [Spelman College](#) in Atlanta, GA, [Howard University](#) in Washington, DC, and [Hampton University](#) in Hampton, VA.



U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

9. Why Are HBCUs Still Significant Today?

There is an increased need for HBCUs today, thanks to the unique opportunities these schools provide. The Thurgood Marshall College Fund notes that [9% of Black college students attend HBCUs today](#). External link: [open_in_new](#) HBCUs award 22% of the bachelor's degrees earned by Black students.

HBCUs also provide valuable STEM-focused education opportunities. [HBCU bachelor's degrees in STEM areas account for 20% of all STEM bachelor's degrees earned by Black graduates \(PDF, 629 KB\)](#), External link: [open_in_new](#) according to the United Negro College Fund (UNCF).

And beyond education, HBCUs provide a diverse and inclusive student experience. These schools create an environment that is safe for all students, and they're known for providing excellent student support.

While HBCUs welcome a variety of students, the majority of HBCU students are first-generation, low-income students. The Thurgood Marshall College Fund notes that more than 75% of HBCU students depend on Pell Grants while almost 13% of HBCU students depend on PLUS Loans to be able to afford their education.

Attending an HBCU is more affordable than attending a traditional school, too. In fact, the UNCF reports that [attending an HBCU costs 28% less than it would cost to attend a similar non-HBCU school \(PDF, 629 KB\)](#). External link: [open_in_new](#)

A Gallup poll found that [HBCU graduates were more likely to be thriving in financial and social well-being than graduates of non-HBCU schools \(PDF, 147 KB\)](#), External link: [open_in_new](#) making a bachelor's or HBCU graduate degree a promising investment.

The HBCU Experience

HBCUs deliver a unique Black college experience. HBCUs strive to create supportive, engaging environments. You may be surrounded by students from many geographic locations, and you will have the chance to learn from a variety of mentors and educators.

The experience you will have at school will vary depending on the HBCU that you attend, but many of these schools provide rich, engaging academic and social experiences. Clubs and organizations may give you the chance to get involved and

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

even explore leadership opportunities. HBCU homecoming events and commencement celebrations can provide an opportunity to celebrate accomplishments while still being grounded in history.

Many HBCUs also give you the chance to join historically Black sororities and fraternities. These Black Greek letter organizations began back in the early 1900s. The Greek organizations at traditionally white institutions excluded Black students from joining, so Black students started their own.

Today, the Divine Nine historically Black fraternities and sororities include:

- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- Iota Phi Theta Fraternity
- Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity
- Omega Psi Phi Fraternity
- Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity
- Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority
- Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

Founded on the principle of service, these fraternities and sororities may provide valuable opportunities to get involved in the HBCU Greek experience and to form strong bonds with your peers.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

10. How Many HBCUs Are There in the United States?

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes more than 102 HBCUs. These schools are primarily located in the southeast, but students can choose to attend HBCUs in Pennsylvania, Maryland or even the U.S. Virgin Islands.

These schools offer an array of HBCU bachelor's degrees and HBCU master's degree programs, including online education options. With more than 100 institutions, it may seem impossible to create a comprehensive list of HBCUs. When looking into the right HBCU, consider looking for schools in a state or region you are interested in, ones that have a program you want to study and, of course, one that offers the degree you are seeking, be it a bachelor's, master's or another degree.

HBCU FAQ

There is a lot to learn and understand about HBCUs and what they can offer students. We've answered some of the most frequently asked questions about HBCUs below.

What Makes a College an HBCU?

The Higher Education Act of 1965 defines an HBCU as "any historically Black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary." Are all Black colleges HBCUs? Not necessarily, depending on when they were established. Newly founded colleges don't fit this definition of an HBCU.

Where Are HBCUs Located?

There are 102 HBCUs in operation today, and they're located in 19 states. HBCUs tend to be concentrated within the southeastern region of the United States, ranging as far west as Texas and as far north as Pennsylvania. Maryland, Florida, and Arkansas are home to four HBCUs each. The University of the District of Columbia and Howard University are both located in the District of Columbia, and if you're looking for a more remote location, you may want to consider the University of the Virgin Islands.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Can Anyone Apply to an HBCU?

HBCUs were originally established with the goal of educating Black students. However, students of all races can enroll in these schools. In addition to the traditionally Black enrollment at HBCUs, many of these schools are actively promoting increased diversity. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that in 2018, non-black students accounted for 24% of the students enrolled at HBCUs. In 1976, non-Black students accounted for just 15% of students in HBCUs.

What Are the Advantages of an HBCU?

Why are HBCUs still around today? They continue to be popular because of the many advantages they offer to students. The UNCF reports that the cost of attending an HBCU is 28% less than the cost of attending a similar non-HBCU, making HBCUs a highly affordable education option. The UNCF report also notes that Black HBCU graduates reported that they received better support and engagement at an HBCU school when compared to their peers who attended non-HBCUs.

Last updated May 2022

!

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

11.14 Things to Expect as An HBCU Student

Last updated April 12, 2023

You may be familiar with [Historically Black Colleges & Universities](#) (HBCUs), or are even planning to apply to one, but do you know what it's actually like to attend one? Here are 14 things to expect as an HBCU student!

You will see an abundance of Black excellence.

At an HBCU, you will be surrounded with like-minded students striving to grow and pushing to reach professional and academic success. Your professors know where you are and what it takes to get you to where you want to be. Everywhere you turn there will be someone doing great things. Enjoy it.

Networking will become second nature.

The HBCU network is like having an extended family. You will meet tons of successful professionals, alumni, professors, and students just waiting to reach out a helping hand or pass along their knowledge so take advantage!

School rivalries feel more like arguing with your cousins.

HBCU students are all interconnected in some way – until it comes down to friendly competition. Whether it's sports, academia, or who has the most pride, no one will ever be able to talk down upon, discredit, challenge, or speak ill of your HBCU in your presence. Your comebacks will be delivered with rapid-fire precision, and you will more than likely gain friends from your rival HBCU because of how much fun you have going back and forth with each other. Just know, at the end of the day it's all love.

Just like the Force, your school pride will always be with you.

Your HBCU will become your second home, and nothing will ever change that. It will have a significant role in influencing who you become and you will develop an undying love for your campus, much like the rest of us.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Homecoming is a BIG deal.

Most schools have a homecoming weekend but at an HBCU it will most likely be a full *week* of activities. There will be concerts, fashion shows, comedy nights, lyceum events, step shows, football games, tailgates and much more! There is no other experience like an HBCU homecoming.

Black history will spill over into your other subjects.

Whether you take a class devoted to the subject or not, you will most likely learn tidbits of Black history wherever you go on an HBCU campus. You will learn about all the ways and spaces Black people have shaped the world. It won't matter if it's math, biology, psychology, or English class; Black history 365 is real.

Alumni have open-door policies from jump.

Most HBCUs have very notable and successful alumni who are eager to give back and pass the torch. They will connect with you and if you're lucky, provide internship and research opportunities to help you out along the way!

Random pep rallies and turn-ups around campus are the norm.

It's not uncommon to be walking back to your dorm and notice, out of nowhere; a full-blown party has formed in the middle of the yard. There will be students gathering, Greeks stepping, and a DJ blasting music—in broad daylight. Don't ask questions, just go!

You will end up devoting half of your life to some kind of organization.

It's very difficult to avoid being involved with something on an HBCU campus. You will most likely join a sorority or fraternity, the band, student government or one of the many other student-oriented organizations on campus. And you will love every minute of it.

The cafeteria is really a runway in disguise.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

At HBCUs, the cafeteria is prime stomping ground for all things fashion. At some point you will wonder how an entire fashion show popped up in the line for chicken Wednesday. It happens to the best of us.

No games are played when it comes to the band.

Half time will never be the same. HBCU bands are notorious for showing up and showing out! Joining one is like being adopted by a second family.

You will most likely see celebs drop in on campus.

Celebrities love HBCUs. Whether they come for an event, a lecture, to teach, for homecoming, to endorse a cause, or to just show love as alumni, you will bump into someone famous on your campus!

You will be exposed to diversity in all aspects.

Contrary to popular belief, HBCUs are extremely diverse. You will be exposed to professors and fellow classmates that come from all religions, sexual orientations, races, backgrounds, cultures and creeds, and economic levels.

Your glow up will be strong.

Growth is inevitable. You will find out more about yourself than you've ever discovered before. You will be challenged culturally, intellectually, politically, and professionally. Don't be afraid. Dive in and be great!

Want to learn more about HBCUs? [Click here for more information](#) or text [#Hello to 33-55-77](#) to chat with one of our advisors. If you're using a mobile device, [click here to have the text message set up for you](#)

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

12. Five Common Characteristics of Hispanic Students Attending HBCUs

By [Heather J. Mathers](#) / March 11, 2016

The tidal shift of the rising Hispanic sector in the United States has been recognized as a growing area of focus in higher education. As the largest growing adolescent population, young Hispanics are making their way in droves to college campuses across the country. Many are opting out of predominately White institutions and choosing to attend Minority Serving Institutions, to include Historically Black Colleges and Universities, a segment of the higher education system that has historically focused on creating inclusionary environments from people of color.

The Department of Education found that between 1980 and 2011, total undergraduate fall enrollment for minority student enrollment increased by almost 300 percent and the Hispanic enrollment level increased by a little more than 500 percent. At HBCUs, Hispanics currently represent roughly three percent of the population; however, according to the [Thurgood Marshall College Fund](#), their enrollment at these institutions increased 124 percent over the last three decades.

In states with higher Hispanic residents, HBCUs have targeted recruitment efforts towards increasing this minority group's presence on campus and have noted a significant increase in their Hispanic student enrollment numbers. For example, [St. Philip's College](#) in San Antonio, initially established as a HBCU, is currently recognized as the only college to be federally designated as both a Historically Black College and a [Hispanic Serving Institution](#).

The growing Hispanic population at HBCUs has resulted in increasing awareness towards the Hispanic student experiences on campus. The question remains whether the welcoming, inclusionary environment that HBCUs have been lauded for is experienced cross-culturally for their Hispanic counterparts. Because minimal research exists regarding this particular population at HBCUs, continued research is necessary; therefore, identifying common characteristics of Hispanic students attending HBCUs could contribute to the awareness, knowledge, and understanding for how to better serve this particular population. There are five specific characteristics that emerged from the research surrounding the Hispanic student experience at HBCUs.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

1. High ethnic identity development. Hispanic students who attend HBCUs tend to have high ethnic identity developments. Individuals who have high ethnic identity developments feel comfortable with their ethnic backgrounds, their histories, and the unique traditions that contribute to these ethnicities. They understand what their ethnicity means to them; it is a part of how they classify themselves on a personal, subconscious level and in the larger social context. They feel comfortable saying “I am Hispanic” and celebrating what that means with their social groups and in their larger communities.

Culturally dexterous. An individual who is culturally dexterous feels comfortable in diverse settings where he or she may be the minority. Many Hispanic students who choose to attend HBCUs were raised in diverse communities and had diverse friend groups throughout their adolescence; these early experiences directly translate to their comfortability in a college environment where they have minority representation. Hispanic students at HBCUs have predominately African American friend groups in college and are typically the only Hispanic individuals in their social experiences. However, many feel that this exclusivity creates an opportunity where they can grow their cultural awareness of others from different ethnic backgrounds.

Identify with multiple Hispanic subgroup populations. Because the term Hispanic and Latino/a are umbrella terms used to categorize a variety of Hispanic subgroup populations, many Hispanic individuals prefer to identify with their family's country of origin- such as Dominican, Ecuadorian, Mexican, and Puerto Rican- as their main ethnic identity. Each of these subgroup populations include specific traditions, customs, and histories that are distinctive to that particular population, and grouping all individuals from these locations under Hispanic as an overarching classification creates some concerns. HBCU personnel needs to remain cognizant of these geographic and cultural differences and how they contribute to an individual's identity, self-esteem, and inclusion on campus.

Need to share their cultural heritage. For Hispanic students at HBCUs, sharing their unique cultural customs with their larger campus communities allows them to feel included and involved during their development college years. Celebrating their heritages allows these individuals to educate their diverse peer groups. This creates a sense of belonging for Hispanic students as they circumnavigate their roles in their predominately African American settings at HBCUs. Many Hispanic students have created their own Hispanic clubs and organizations on campus to share their

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

culture with others, to educate their peers, and to celebrate their customs with the larger campus community.

Want to feel included. College students want to feel included in their larger campus communities, regardless of their cultural or ethnic backgrounds. This is the case for Hispanic students attending HBCUs, especially because they are in settings that are predominately African American and their Hispanic identities create instances where they become conscious of their cultural differences from their peers. Many Hispanic students choose to attend HBCUs over predominately White institutions because they feel that diversity will be celebrated more in a minority serving institutional setting.

Today, HBCUs find themselves in position to increase diversity on their campuses by reaching out to the Hispanic population. Hispanic students, similar to their African American peers, have distinct needs when matriculating and successfully completing college, especially because Hispanics tend to be the most disadvantaged and least likely group to graduate. However, by understanding common characteristics associated with their increasing Hispanic student population, HBCUs can better serve these individuals to promote a positive, inclusionary college environment for all who attend these historic institutions.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

13. The Influx of Latino Students at Historically Black Colleges

“Why not open our doors to a group that has been similarly marginalized and oppressed?”

By Lekan Oguntoyinbo

Ramiro Bautista sought to accomplish two things after graduating from a two-year college in 2005. Primarily, he wanted to get into a four-year college with a reputable business program. Secondly, he wanted to be near a friend who received a full athletic scholarship to a certain university. That college turned out to be Prairie View A&M University, a historically black college about 45 minutes northwest of Houston.

Back then, says Bautista, Latinos were a miniscule presence on the campus, accounting for less than 3 percent of the student body. Since fall 2000, growth of Latinos on campus has been more than 230 percent, according to the university. Despite a small drop during the last academic year, Latinos now make up more than 5 percent of the population.

“When I came here in 2005 the outreach wasn’t there,” says Bautista, who stuck around after graduation in 2007 to get his MBA, is currently pursuing his doctorate there, and serves as the university’s assistant registrar. “For the last three to five years, the university has been targeting markets with heavy populations of Latinos. As a result, there’s been a steady increase in the number of Latinos.”

For several years, he says, the university employed a full-time recruiter, a Latino who was also an alumnus and whose primary responsibility was attracting Latino prospects.

He says that A&M has also introduced a Direct Connect Program aimed at community-college students looking to transfer to a four-year university. Based on the terms of the Direct Connect Program, students from Texas public community colleges with associate degrees who are U.S. citizens and residents of Texas may

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

transfer to Prairie View A&M University and are eligible to pay the same fixed tuition and mandatory-fees rate, at the time of registration, as that of their prior institution. These students will also receive a Direct Connect Tuition Assistance Scholarship to offset the cost.

* * *

Diversity is increasingly becoming a priority for many historically black colleges. In recent years, many have worked diligently to attract international students as well as students of other races and ethnicities, especially Latinos.

This is particularly true in states that have high numbers of Latinos, such as Texas.

Some higher-education experts say that the mission of HBCUs to serve the historically disenfranchised strikes a chord with Latinos.

Deborah Santiago, chief operating officer and vice president for policy at Excelencia in Education, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group that promotes the interests of Latinos in higher education, says that HBCUs generally tend to be more student focused and have faculty who are culturally competent, making them attractive to emerging populations such as Latinos.

That's a view echoed by Marybeth Gasman, a professor of higher education at the University of Pennsylvania.

"HBCUs often have family environments and Latinos feel more comfortable in these environments," she says, adding that HBCUs generally have lower tuition and that this appeals to Latinos, many of whom come from lower-income families.

Many HBCUs have worked diligently to attract international students as well as students of other races and ethnicities, especially Latinos.

Adds Jerry Crawford, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Kansas, who has done extensive research on HBCUs, "Ever since the 1890s, their mission has always been to educate the underserved. Most people equate HBCUs with African Americans. However, many times HBCUs took [other] people of lower socioeconomic status."

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

The ability to recruit Latinos, he says, is even more critical today as more colleges operate as businesses and those who fail to do so go belly up. Latinos, he says, are a potentially bountiful market for all colleges, including HBCUs.

“More and more Hispanics are becoming aware of filling out Pell grants,” Crawford says. “More are becoming college eligible. More universities are allowing students who don’t have full documentation to enter college.”

Santiago says that it is in the best interest of HBCUs to recruit Latinos.

* * *

“The reality is the number of Latinos eligible to go to college has increased,” says Santiago. “There is an awareness of that. HBCUs have found ways to try to be more competitive. They are being smart. Their survival can depend on recruiting more students and widening their base. Given the precarious situation of some HBCUs, their future could depend on their ability to attract these students.”

Linda Jackson, the director of university relations for Huston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas, an institution that has seen 14 years of consecutive enrollment growth, says 19 percent of the approximately 1,030 students in 2010 were Latino, compared to 10 percent in 2004. She says Latino enrollment has hovered at around 19 percent since 2010.

Jackson attributes the significant number of Latinos to several factors, including Texas’ large Latino population and the university’s attractive array of academic offerings. She says the university has an enrollment strategy in place aimed at targeting numerous groups, including working adults, traditional African American students, and Latinos.

At Paul Quinn College in Dallas, President Michael Sorrell says 20 percent of the incoming students this year are Latinos, up from about 15 percent last year. He says approximately 12 percent of the student body is Latino.

Sorrell, who’s been president for eight years, says that, in addition to Texas, the students come from many other locales around the country, including Detroit, Chicago, New York, and California.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

He insists that Paul Quinn doesn't recruit students based on race or ethnicity, but on whether they are a fit for the college's values, which include placing the team above the individual.

"I always found it distasteful when schools recruited me because I'm black," says Sorrell, a Duke University-trained attorney. "I don't want to be your diversity experience. To me, there's a higher level of sincerity when people view me as more than just a skin color."

That said, his senior recruiter, a graduate of the college, is Latina. "She wasn't hired for any reason other than the fact that she's good," he says.

Sorrell adds that Paul Quinn entices students for other reasons, including the fact that the students receive a vigorous liberal-arts education, earn professional work experience in their last two years, and typically graduate with no more than \$10,000 in debt.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

14. At some HBCUs, enrollment rises from surprising applicants

After decades of declining enrollment, HBCUs are seeing an uptick in new applicants, especially among Latino and international students.

March 5, 2020 | by [Alex Baumhardt](#)

Graduation day at Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, D.C. Howard is among a number of HBCUs increasing the number of international students on campus.

Fahad Alharthi didn't know what a historically black college and university (HBCU) was before he applied to one. He grew up in Saudi Arabia, and after 18 months of intensive English-language courses in California, he applied to Tennessee State University, an HBCU in Nashville.

"I think 90 percent — if not 100 percent — of Saudi students, when they come to TSU, they didn't come because it's an HBCU," Alharthi said. "I think they come because of what they've heard about it."

What they've heard about TSU is that there's a growing number of Saudi students. Tennessee State is just one HBCU that's put a lot of effort into recruiting international students, especially from Saudi Arabia. In 2008, international students there numbered just 77. Eight years later, it was up to 549. At TSU, [70 percent of international students are from Saudi Arabia](#).

[Delece Smith-Barrow](#), a senior editor at The Hechinger Report, says some HBCUs have turned around significant declines in enrollment over the last few decades by recruiting more international students and more students who aren't black. She wrote about how the schools are working to retain their campus culture and curriculum as [the makeup of their student bodies changes](#).

"HBCUs, just like predominantly white institutions, are definitely looking at their enrollment numbers and figuring out how to boost them and how to strengthen them," Smith-Barrow said. "International students bring extra dollars with them because they're not paying in-state tuition. Oftentimes, they're paying maybe twice that much."

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Other HBCUs are recruiting more Latino students. Paul Quinn College is an HBCU with campuses in Dallas and Plano, Texas. It was one of those HBCUs that suffered declining enrollment for decades but is now seeing a surge in Latino students in the past few years. In 2012, there were around 200 students enrolled at the school. Today, there are more than 500 students. Nearly a quarter of those students are Hispanic or Latino.

Alexya Soto, a Latina student and business major at Paul Quinn, toured the school in high school because she was interested in a soccer scholarship there.

"I didn't picture myself going to an HBCU," Soto said. "That wasn't one of my plans. If I'm being honest, I was kind of worried like, what if I don't feel like I belong? But that was obviously not the case."

After touring campus, however, she says she was won over by the sense of community at the school. She even met the university president and still talks with him frequently today.

"I couldn't imagine myself going to any other school other than Paul Quinn, because they were so welcoming," she said. "It's a family, and a family-oriented school. It's heavily focused on putting others over yourself."

RACE ON CAMPUS

Students of color want a safer, more equitable college experience. Colleges and universities are trying to keep up.

Robert Palmer says this sense of belonging and security and family might be what's creating a slight uptick in the number of African American students choosing to go to HBCUs as well. He's a professor at the School of Education at Howard University, an HBCU in Washington D.C. Palmer co-authored [a report](#) with Janelle L. Williams, an associate dean at Widener University, on enrollment changes at HBCUs since the 2016 presidential election.

"There had been some anecdotal evidence that more black students were choosing to attend HBCUs because of the political climate created by Donald Trump," Palmer said. "I wanted to see if that was actually true."

They interviewed 80 freshman and sophomores across four HBCUs. These students would have been choosing an HBCU as their first college or transferring to an HBCU during the last four years. Palmer says students talked about white peers at their

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

high schools embracing racist language and joining the president's call to "build the wall." Many students said they saw racial incidents happening at the University of Missouri in 2015, and later in 2017 at the University of Virginia, and because of that, didn't want to go to a predominantly white campus.

"Students really kind of talked about how they decided to attend an HBCU because it provided them with a safe space where they didn't have to face those issues," Palmer said. "So that was one of the main takeaways is that knowing that HBCUs kind of provided this safe haven."

He says some students he talked with had even left scholarships behind at predominantly white schools and took out loans in order to transfer to an HBCU.

"And that was OK for them," he said. "It was about having that safe space where students feel secured and nurtured and felt like they mattered."

Educate is a collaboration with [The Hechinger Report](#), a nonprofit, independent news organization that focuses on inequality and innovation in education.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

15. Ten Reasons to Attend a Historically Black College/University (HBCU) or Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)

By [Jessica Velasco](#) Last updated on December 22, 2022

Specialized mission colleges focus on educating specific groups of students. The most common specialized mission colleges are the [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#) (HBCU) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI). An HBCU and HSI offer many great resources for their students. In addition, contrary to popular belief, HBCUs and HSIs educate students of all races, ethnicities, and cultures—not just African American and Hispanic/Latino students.

Here are ten reasons to consider attending a HBCU or HSI.

1. Excellent education HBCUs and HSIs have great reputations in the academic world. HBCU institutions, such as [Howard University](#) and [Morehouse College](#), have long and rich histories of offering top-notch education to their students. Many HSI colleges and universities have well-known academic brands, such as some of the University of California and University of Texas campuses. Just like all types of colleges, many HBCUs and HSIs offer great educational experiences.

2. Something for everyone HBCUs and HSIs come in all shapes and sizes. There are public and private HBCUs and HSIs. HBCUs are located throughout the southern United States, while HSIs are located in 15 states located all over the country. Some are huge with over 30,000 students, while others have only 1,000 students. Whatever students are looking for in a college or university, they will probably find multiple HBCUs and HSIs that meet their needs.

3. Location Many HBCUs and HSIs are located in areas with large populations of African American and Latino students. For some students, going far away from home is not an option. Therefore, attending a close college or university makes the transition to college easier for students who want to obtain a college education.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

4. Classes HBCUs and HSIs offer many academic programs, just like most colleges and universities. HBCUs and HSIs may also have in-depth courses on the history and experiences of African American and Hispanic/Latino people and cultures. These types of classes are great opportunities for all students who attend the HBCU and HSI campuses, no matter their race or ethnicity.

5. Extracurricular activities Just like the in-depth courses available at HBCUs and HSIs, they also have a wide array of extracurricular activities. Many of the clubs, organizations, and activities give students the opportunity to explore the history, culture, and experiences of African American and Hispanic individuals and groups.

6. Diversity The names may include “Black” and “Hispanic,” but HBCUs and HSIs have diverse student bodies. Some HBCUs have large percentages of African American students, while others have less than 20 percent African American students. HSIs must have at least 25 percent of their students with Hispanic backgrounds. HBCUs and HSIs attract students from all over the country and the world. In addition, they attract students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

7. Supportive campus communities HBCUs and HSIs are known for being supportive of the needs of their students. They offer many great resources for students, including resources to help students transition to college, as well as resources to help students once they graduate.

8. Alumni associations Almost all HBCUs and HSIs have active alumni associations for their graduates. In addition, there are many chapters of HBCU and HSI alumni associations that are open to any student who has graduated from a HBCU or HSI campus. Alumni associations are great resources for networking no matter where the alumnus is in their career life.

9. Long histories and legacies Many of the HBCUs and HSIs have long histories and legacies of educating African American and Hispanic students. For HBCUs, many were founded with the mission of educating African American students after the American Civil War. Hispanic-serving schools may have been educating Hispanic students for many years, but officially were recognized as a HSI as part of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Each HBCU and HSI has a unique history that plays a part in what the campus is today.

10. Motivated to be leaders These campuses have wonderful mentors for students to go on and do great things. Some well-known individuals are alumni of HBCUs and HSIs. For example, author Toni Morrison attended Howard University

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

and Oprah Winfrey attended [Tennessee State University](#), both HBCUs. Former U.S. Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis, attended [California Polytechnic State University](#), and ABC news correspondent Gio Benitez attended [Florida International University](#), both HSIs.

The missions of HBCUs and HSIs are to provide educational opportunities for African American and Latino students. However, their doors are open to all students, no matter their race or ethnicity.

There are over 100 HBCUs and over 250 HSIs in the United States for students to choose from. HBCUs and HSIs offer wonderful and great educational opportunities and communities for students and have a lot to offer their students.

By Jessica Velasco

Jessica Velasco is an independent college counselor and founder of [JLV College Counseling](#). She uses her prior experience and knowledge as an admission counselor and director to provide guidance to students and their parents as they go through the college admissions process.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

16. JOINING THE MILITARY AS AN OFFICER

How long it takes to become an officer depends on the path you choose (<https://www.careersinthemilitary.com/optionsbecoming-an-officer>).

- Be 17-35 years old
- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent
- Be in good health
- Be in good moral standing

There are four paths to become an officer:

1. RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) In this program, students enroll in elective leadership and military courses at their college or university, in addition to the courses required for their degree. ROTC students receive a stipend for books, tuition, and expenses. When they graduate, students are commissioned as officers at the rank of Second Lieutenant.

Schools in every state offer ROTC programs, which allow students to have a traditional college experience while preparing to become an officer. Each service branch has its own ROTC. (<https://www.todaymilitary.com/education-training/rotcprograms>)

2. OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL (OCS)

OCS, or Officer Training School (OTS), (<https://www.todaymilitary.com/joining-eligibility/becoming-military-officer/officercandidate-school>) is the principal means by which prospective officers are trained. To be eligible, candidates must have completed a four-year college degree.

There are three types of OCS candidates:

- Graduates from a traditional four-year college
- Enlisted personnel transitioning to officers roles
- Direct Commission Officers.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Each military branch has its own officer candidate school. Programs last 10 to 17 weeks.

3. MILITARY & SERVICE ACADEMIES

There are five service academies and seven senior military colleges in the United States. Both service academies (<https://www.careersinthemilitary.com/options-becoming-an-officer>) and military colleges (<https://www.careersinthemilitary.com/options-becoming-an-officer>) have very competitive entrance processes similar to an elite college. Both also result in a four-year college degree and commissioned officer status.

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point (<https://www.westpoint.edu/admissions>), the U.S. Naval Academy (<https://www.usna.edu/Admissions/index.php>), and the U.S. Air Force Academy (<https://www.academyadmissions.com/prepare/>) are service academies. Each is publicly funded and offers full, four-year scholarships covering all tuition, books, board, and medical coverage. Similar to ROTC, cadets earn a commission as a Second Lieutenant upon graduation. Service requirements after graduation vary by job specialty.

Senior military colleges combine higher education with military instruction and require ROTC participation. Unlike service academies, there is no service requirement upon graduation, except for those cadets who receive an ROTC scholarship. These institutions are also among the most prestigious educational institutions and include Texas A&M (<https://corps.tamu.edu/why-the-corps/>), The Citadel (<https://www.citadel.edu/root/cadet-admissions>), the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) (<https://www.vmi.edu/admissions-and-aid/>).

4. DIRECT COMMISSION

Leaders in professional fields, such as law, medicine, and religion, can become officers through direct commissioning. The U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Coast Guard all offer direct commission options. The commitment length varies.

Direct commission officers can be either active duty or reserve (<https://www.asvabprogram.com/media-center-article/66>).

- Officer salaries are similar to the salaries of mid-level to senior corporate executives. However, officers enjoy cost-saving benefits such as housing, food allowances, tax advantages, and health care benefits.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

- Reserve officers can serve while continuing their civilian careers at home.
- Deployment depends on the Military branch chosen and the assigned units.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

17. BEING A MILITARY OFFICER COMMISSIONED VS. NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

A commissioned officer is a military officer who has achieved a rank before officially assuming their role. These officers' Presidential commissions allow them to command both officers and enlisted personnel under them. These commissions include first and second lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels, lieutenant colonels, and generals. All commissioned officers outrank non-commissioned officers (e.g., a sergeant). The most significant difference between commissioned and non-commissioned officers is their level of authority over other service members.

KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENLISTED PERSONNEL AND MILITARY OFFICERS MORE RESOURCES ON JOINING THE MILITARY

Careers in the Military: Options Enlisted vs. Officer

(<https://www.careersinthemilitary.com/options-enlisted-vs-officer>) What's the Difference?: Enlisted vs. Officer (<https://www.asvabprogram.com/media-center-article/66>) What's the Difference?: Active Duty vs. Reserve

(<https://www.asvabprogram.com/media-center-article/67>) Qualified to Serve: Military Eligibility Requirements (<https://www.asvabprogram.com/media-center-article/109>) SOURCES

- Commissioned officers must have a college degree. Officer salaries are similar to the salaries of mid-level to senior corporate executives. However, officers enjoy cost-saving benefits such as housing, food allowances, tax advantages, and health care benefits.
- Reserve officers can serve while continuing their civilian careers at home.
- Deployment depends on the Military branch chosen and the assigned unit.
- The commitment length varies.
- Basic training
- Schooling
- Advancement & authority

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

- Time commitment
- Technical training
- Pay

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

18. Frequently Asked Questions About Scholarships

Last updated May 3, 2023

Here are some common questions students have when searching for and applying to scholarships - and our answers! Don't see your question answered here? Text **#Scholarships to 33-55-77!**

[\(Lee este artículo en español aquí!\)](#)

When to apply:

When should I start applying for scholarships?

We recommend starting your search the summer before your senior year. If you find scholarships that aren't open yet or aren't due for a few months, be sure to save them to apply to later. By starting your scholarship research early, you can familiarize yourself with typical scholarship requirements, begin brainstorming and drafting any required application essays, and give your educators plenty of time to write you [letters of recommendation](#). This preparation will leave you feeling more confident to begin applying in the fall!

Should I apply for scholarships before or after I'm admitted to colleges?

We recommend applying to as many scholarships as possible before being admitted or committing to any college or university. More time spent applying can lead to receiving more money for college!

I'm already in college. Is it too late to apply for scholarships?

No! There are SO many scholarships out there available to students of all ages, years in school, major, and more! It's never too late to find money for college, so consistently searching for scholarships is key. Your major is also a good place to check for scholarships.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Where to look:

Where should I look for scholarships?

We made a list of the [best scholarship websites](#) to begin your search. We also have our own [hand-picked scholarship lists](#) that we thoroughly vet and update often!

How do I know if a scholarship is legit?

First and foremost: trust your gut! If you come across a scholarship or website that seems off, it probably is - so leave the website and keep searching elsewhere. There are also some things we urge students to keep an eye out for when they come across a scholarship they're considering applying to:

- **Does the website list previous winners?** Legit scholarships will typically list previous winners somewhere on their scholarship homepage, so if you can't find that anywhere, it's usually a red flag.
- **Does the website require payment to apply?** Legit scholarships will **NEVER** require you to pay to apply. EVER. If you find a scholarship that requires payment, leave the site.

Legit scholarships will be transparent with applicants about required application materials, deadlines, timelines, and more. Always use your judgment when applying!

FAFSA:

Do I need to complete the FAFSA in order to apply for scholarships?

Yes. Almost all scholarships will require you to have [completed the FAFSA](#) before applying. Even if you don't think you'll qualify for need-based aid awarded through the FAFSA, it's still important that you complete it, since it's a requirement to receive other forms of financial aid like scholarships, [loans](#), and [grants](#).

Miscellaneous:

Does taking a gap year hurt my scholarship chances?

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Potentially, yes. Some scholarships are only awarded to students transitioning directly from high school to college. If you already received a scholarship and now are considering a gap year, be sure to communicate clearly with the scholarship organization about your plans. They may not be able to award you the money until you begin school.

How can I best stay organized when applying to lots of different scholarships?

You're in luck! We made a free [scholarship application tracker](#) to help you stay organized during your scholarship search.

Do I have to re-apply for scholarships every school year?

It depends on the scholarship. Some are one-time scholarships, while others can renew each term or school year depending on your grades or any specific requirements the scholarship has for students to keep it. If you receive a scholarship, be sure to ask about any renewal requirements you will need to follow.

Are scholarships universally accepted by all colleges? How are they processed?

They should be. Private scholarships will likely mail a check to you that you can give to your school's financial aid office to lower your student balance. If they can't process it, be sure to talk to someone who represents the private scholarship as well as a financial aid officer at your school to troubleshoot. Scholarships awarded directly to you by your college or university will be applied directly to your student financial aid account.

Are there scholarships for students with a GPA less than 3.0?

Of course! Google "scholarships with no GPA requirements" or check out [Niche's list](#) to start looking.

Scholarship Deliverables:

Do most scholarships require test scores?

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

All scholarships will have different submission requirements (like essays, test scores, etc.) so it's super important to thoroughly read the requirements of each individual scholarship. Some may require SAT/ACT scores, while others won't.

How long should my scholarship essay be?

It depends on the scholarship you're applying to. If you're required to write an essay, the organization should give you a prompt, essay length, and any other important information you need to write and submit your essay. If they don't specify the length, a good general rule is to make it around 5 paragraphs long, including an introduction and conclusion.

For scholarships that require a letter of recommendation, can you reuse past letters of recommendation?

Typically, yes - but **ALWAYS**:

1. Check in with the person who wrote you a letter of recommendation to give them a head's up before submitting it. This way they'll be prepared in case someone from the scholarship organization reaches out to them to talk.
2. Be sure the letter of recommendation doesn't reference a different scholarship.

Get Schooled has lots of free scholarship resources for you!

- Sign up for free [scholarship email alerts](#)
- Check out our hand-picked [scholarship lists](#)
- Text **#Scholarships to 33-55-77** to receive personalized scholarship support

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

19. How Do You Talk to Your Parents About Paying for College?

Planning for college can be really exciting. It can also be a little scary. You've probably heard that college costs a lot. You might be worried about how you'll pay for it. Your parents might be worried, too. **The best thing you can do is talk to them.** Find out what they're thinking and how they might be able to help you. Learn about your financial aid options and make a plan together. If you and your parents are on the same page, you'll all feel better, and you won't have any surprises later on.

Be prepared to talk.

First, make sure you understand how much college will really cost. There are five things you need to think about.

1. **Tuition and Fees.** This is what your college charges to take classes.
2. **Room and Board.** You might live on- or off-campus. You'll have to pay for food and utilities.
3. **Books and supplies.** You'll need to rent or buy textbooks and other course materials.
4. **Personal expenses.** You'll need to buy clothes, do your laundry, pay for your cell phone, etc. Check out this [Off-to-College Checklist](#) for an idea of what you might need.
5. **Transportation.** You might need to pay for your car, gas, a parking pass, or a bus pass.

All of those costs together are called your **Cost of Attendance (COA)**. They can really add up! The good news is most students don't have to pay the total COA because of [financial aid](#).

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Find your Net Price.

Net Price is the most important number to look at as you plan to pay for college.

- Net Price is your COA minus free money, like [federal and state grants and scholarships](#). In other words, it's the price you really have to pay to go to college.

You can pay your college's Net Price with other kinds of financial aid, like private [scholarships](#), [work-study](#), or [loans](#). Your parents might be able to help you pay the Net Price, too. It's important to talk to them about it.

- Learn how to [find the Net Price of colleges on your list](#).
- Write down the Net Price for your top choices before you start a conversation with your parents.

Start a conversation.

College will be your first big investment. There's a lot to know and a lot of decisions to make. Start talking to your parents as early as middle school and keep talking! It'll help them support you as you make a plan to pay for college.

Here are a few tips to get a conversation going.

- **Make time to talk.** Schedule time to sit down and talk to your parents about paying for college. Don't just spring it on them or wait until it comes up.
- **Tell them your goals.** Explain why college is important to you. Share your career plans, and how college will help you reach them.
- **Share what you know.** Tell your parents that you plan to apply for financial aid. Explain how free money, like grants and scholarships, can bring your costs down. Let them know you'll need their help filling out the application.
- **Talk about Net Price.** Share the net price for each college on your list. Tell your parents some ways you could pay for it yourself, like work-study or student loans. Talk about how they might be able to help you.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Get your parents' input, too. They may have already started thinking about paying for college. They may be able to help you a lot, a little, or not at all. Talking about money can be awkward. Be direct, but also sensitive. Here are some good questions to ask.

- Have you thought about how I can pay for college? What's your vision?
- Do you have any money saved for my college? If so, how much? If not, do you think you could start saving?
- What colleges are you willing to help pay for? Does it matter?
- What kind of expenses are you willing to help me with? How much can you put toward them?
- If you can't help me pay for college, can you support me in other ways? Could I live at home while I go to college?
- Do you have any advice for how I can manage my money while I'm in college?

Keep your parents involved.

It'll take more than one conversation to make a good plan! Start early, and keep talking to your parents about how you'll pay for college. Here are some other ways they can help you.

- [Have your parents create an account](#). They can use CaliforniaColleges.edu to see your progress and learn more about financial aid.
- When you're ready, ask your parents for help filling out the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) or [California Dream Act Application \(CADAA\)](#).
- After you apply, ask them to help you [compare your financial aid offers](#).

Learn how to talk to your parents about your [college](#) and [career](#) plans.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

20. How Can You Find and Apply for Scholarships?

As you plan to pay for college, start by applying for [federal and state financial aid](#). You could get thousands of dollars to pay for tuition, housing, books, and more. Even so, financial aid may not cover all your college costs. Scholarships can help make up the difference! Scholarships are free money. You don't have to work for them or pay them back.

What kinds of scholarships can you get?

Some scholarships come from the government or your college. Others come from companies or organizations. **There are scholarships for all kinds of students!**

Here are some reasons you may be a good match for a scholarship.

- You have financial need.
- You have good grades.
- You've done really well in other areas, like leadership or the arts.
- You have a career goal like nursing, teaching, or engineering.
- You're really good at a sport.
- You belong to a club or organization.
- You're a certain gender, ethnicity, or religion, or you have a special family situation.

Athletic Scholarships

If you're an athlete and part of an [athletic association](#), you could be eligible for an athletic scholarship. They are very competitive and hard to get. You should apply for [financial aid](#), too.

Here are some important things to know about athletic scholarships.

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

- You'll need to do well in your classes and sport. You may need to get a certain GPA or take specific classes.
- Some scholarships cover full tuition, and some only cover part of it. Some college athletes get no scholarship money at all.
- Athletic scholarships are hard to get. Colleges look for student-athletes who also have other interests. Consider doing other activities besides sports.
- College athletic recruiting begins early in high school. Go to local camps or competitions to improve your chances of being recruited.

Talk to your counselor about how to get an athletic scholarship.

How can you find scholarships?

Look for scholarships in your community. Here are some great places to start.

- Your high school counselor.
- Your college financial aid office.
- Your local library.
- Non-profit organizations or businesses.
- Religious or community groups.
- Professional associations related to your career path.

Also check out these trustworthy websites.

- [CareerOneStop](#).
- [Big Future Scholarship Search](#).
- [Sallie Mae Scholarship Search](#).
- [Unigo / Scholarship Experts](#).
- [Fastweb](#).
- [Scholarship America](#).

Learn about financial aid and scholarships for [undocumented students](#), [foster youth](#), [homeless youth](#), or [students with disabilities](#).

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Be careful when searching for scholarships!

- Don't trust sites that guarantee scholarships.
- Never pay to apply.
- Don't give sensitive information, like your Social Security number (SSN).
- If you're not sure about a scholarship, check with a counselor before you apply.

Can scholarships affect your other financial aid?

Colleges that accept you will send you [financial aid offers](#). Your offers will list your college costs and how much federal and state aid you can get if you decide to attend. You can't get more aid than your total cost of attendance (COA).

If scholarships push your total aid over the COA, here's what you should do.

- Work with your college financial aid office. They want to help you make the most of your aid!
- Free money is best! Lower your [loans](#) first. Then, lower your [work-study](#).

How to Apply.

Scholarships all have their own requirements, forms, and deadlines. Here are some steps you should take.

- Keep track of your scholarships.
- Read scholarship websites and forms carefully. Make sure you meet all the requirements and apply on time.
- Scholarships can be very competitive. Give yourself plenty of time to complete your application.
- Ask a parent, counselor, or teacher to look over your application.
- If a scholarship comes from your college, you may need to fill out the [CSS Profile](#).

U-CAN HBCU College Fair Toolkit

Apply for scholarships every year.

Scholarships aren't just for first-year students. You may be able to renew your scholarships or apply for new ones. Get as much free money as you can while you're in college!

- [Financial Aid for Homeless Youth](#)
- [Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Talk to Your Family about Financial Aid](#)
- [Making Smart Money Decisions](#)

Sources:

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships><https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/loans/student-loans/how-to-get-a-scholarship><https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/loans/know-before-applying-for-scholarships><https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0082-scholarship-and-financial-aid-scams>