

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) **Competitiveness Scholars**

BACKGROUND

The White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (WHIHBCU) is excited to announce the launch of HBCU Competitiveness Scholars, a student recognition program designed to honor current HBCU students for their competitiveness, i.e., successfully preparing to compete for top opportunities that improve standards of living in their communities.

The term "competitiveness" embodies our nation's best education and economic opportunities. The HBCU Competitiveness Scholars will help form the next generation of leaders who exhibit and champion HBCU excellence. The WHIHBCU will select Scholars for their:

- Academic Achievement: established classroom performance;
- Civic and Campus Engagement: proven leadership to make a positive difference at their institutions and in their communities; and
- Entrepreneurial Ethos: demonstrated character to pursue new opportunities, despite limited resources, i.e., the "go-getter" or competitive spirit.

For the specified academic school year, Scholars will serve as representatives of their respective institutions and communities to the WHIHBCU. The WHIHBCU will provide outreach and engagement opportunities for Scholars as well as information and resources to disseminate among their fellow students

Scholars will participate in regional events, webinars; and monthly web chats with the WHIHBCU staff and other professionals from a wide range of disciplines. Scholars also will have opportunities to engage with one another to showcase individual and collective talent across the HBCU spectrum.

To inform their experience, Scholars are expected to carefully assess their personal and career aspirations, as well as the needs of their institutions and communities, to help determine the best ways the WHIHBCU and its partners might provide support.

It is essential that the WHIHBCU engage the next generation of leaders who are expected to make meaningful contributions to society. Their growth and development are crucial to the success of our communities, our nation and our global competitiveness.

If the WHIHBCU can be of assistance in the nomination process, or if you have further questions, please contact us at oswhi-hbcu@ed.gov or by phone at (202) 453-5634.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Students will be recognized by the WHIHBCU for one academic school year. During the course of that year, WHIHBCU staff will provide Scholars outreach and engagement opportunities of which they and their fellow students can take advantage.

Scholars are encouraged to build relationships within their institutions, with regional and community-based organizations, as well as, government and private sector entities. Selected Scholars will learn and share proven and promising practices that support new opportunities for all young people.

Additionally, Scholars will have opportunities to participate in regional events, webinars; and web chats that support a wide range of topics, including, but not limited to, the spirit of engagement, competing in the 21st century, entrepreneurship, innovation and career development. All Scholars will be invited to attend and participate in the Annual HBCU Week National Conference in Washington, D.C.

ELIGIBILITY AND RULES

The nominee must submit a completed nomination, including an unofficial transcript, a student interest essay, resume and a signed institutional endorsement commitment letter. The nominee must be a **current** undergraduate, graduate or professional HBCU student in good standing at an accredited institution and must be enrolled in good standing for the entire 2018-2019 academic school year.

The nominee must work with their institution's leadership to complete and submit the nomination package by the established deadline. The nomination package includes: signed nomination form, unofficial transcripts, student interest essay, resume and signed institutional endorsement commitment letter.

Complete nomination packages will be reviewed and approved by HBCU President or Chancellor and submitted to WHIHBCU for final processing. Only **completed nominations** will be accepted.

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HOW TO APPLY

The President or Chancellor will determine the nominee from their institution. The WHIHBCU will accept no more than one nominee per school. Although each HBCU is allowed one (1) nominee, institutions may appeal to the WHIHBCU for one (1) additional nominee. The WHIHBCU will work with the President or Chancellor on a case-by-case basis to review, approve or deny each appeal.

The HBCU Competitiveness Scholar nomination form must be submitted and endorsed by the President, Chancellor or designated surrogate. The WHIHBCUs will electronically collect nominations and narrative responses.

Nomination components are outlined below:

Part A: COMPLETED AND SIGNED NOMINATION FORM

Part B: UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

Required with this nomination is a copy of your nominees' unofficial transcript.

Part C: ENDORSEMENT COMMITMENT LETTER *{To be completed by President or Chancellor}*

President or Chancellor must provide a signed written nomination attesting to the nominee's current performance, potential for a leadership and institutional endorsement commitment.

Part D: STUDENT INTEREST ESSAY *(To be completed by the nominee)*

In 500 words or less, the nominee must briefly describe their

- Academic achievements;
- Demonstrated civic and/or campus engagement;
- Proven entrepreneurial ethos;
- Personal and career aspirations/needs;
- Institutions' and communities' aspirations/ needs; and
- Ideas how the WHIHBCU and this recognition support those aspirations/needs.

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SCHOLAR BENEFITS

***National Recognition**

- Scholars and institution names cited in official press release issued by the WHIHBCU and U.S. Department of Education.
- Recognition Ceremony at Annual HBCU Week National Conference.
- Student name and institutions will also be posted on WHIHBCU website.

***Invitation to Annual HBCU Week National Conference**

- Scholars will be invited to attend workshops designed to help them model promising and proven practices related to the spirit of engagement, competing in the 21st century, entrepreneurship, innovation and career development.
- During the conference workshops and offsite convenings, recognized scholars will have opportunities to engage with their peers, public partners and private organizations from a wide range of disciplines.

***Acknowledgement Letter**

- Scholars will receive an acknowledgment letter signed by the WHIHBCU Executive Director.

***Invitation to Regional Meetings and Virtual Convenings**

- Scholars will be invited to WHIHBCU hosted events and meetings in their region. These events provide students with the opportunity to articulate their contributions and needs during the events and also serve as opportunities to network with partners and stakeholders.
- Scholars will be privy to a series of virtual events designed to connect students at HBCUs with non-profit organizations, industry, federal agencies, and young professionals to explore career development opportunities and identify challenges and solutions for HBCU students preparing to enter the 21st century workforce.

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