



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Historically Black Colleges and Universities Coalesce to Hold COVID Awareness and Resilience Day

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 3, 2021)—Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are joining forces to hold the first in a series of HBCU COVID Awareness and Resilience Days (HBCU-CARD) on May 4, 2021—a day spearheaded by HBCU students that is dedicated to raising awareness and mobilizing communities disproportionately impacted by healthcare inequities during this pandemic.

The goal of HBCU-CARD is to encourage students, alumni, and supporters of HBCU campuses and their surrounding communities to take steps toward increasing public confidence in and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines while reinforcing basic prevention measures such as mask wearing and social distancing.

“Historically Black colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are located within historically marginalized communities. These communities have been the hardest hit by COVID-19. They face the greatest risk for future infections,” said Dr. Goulda A. Downer, Ph.D., FAND, RD, LN, CNS, Howard University College of Medicine Principal Investigator/Associate Professor, HU Telehealth Training Center, and Co-Chair of HBCU-CARD.

“Our students, most of whom are the trusted sons and daughters of these communities, are the perfect group to educate their relatives, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances regarding how to safeguard their health against COVID-19.”

HBCU-CARD, an effort supported by the HBCU Emergency Management Workforce Consortium, housed at Howard University’s Telehealth Training Center, in partnership with the U.S. Health and Human Services COVID-19 Community Corps and the Made to Save Campaign—both national campaigns that focus on empowering people to talk with family and loved ones about safeguarding their health from the COVID-19 pandemic. Key partners for this effort include, National Minority Quality Forum, the White House Initiative on HBCUs, HWC and the MayaTech Corporation, along with a number of federal national and local partners including but not limited to, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“The White House Initiative on HBCUs is excited to participate in and support HBCU COVID and Resilience Day; an effort inspired by HBCU students and led by Howard University Professor Dr. Gouda Downer,” said Dr. Arthur P. McMahan, Senior Associate Director of White House Initiative on HBCUs, said. “The pandemic adversely impacts our entire community and this effort will contribute to the fight to

beat this virus. We are committed to the cause of strengthening HBCUs, students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities.”

During the pandemic, HBCUs have been serving as COVID-19 vaccination sites, disseminating research findings through educational programs, and conducting other activities that are timely and extremely beneficial to campus communities and other clientele, said Noel M. Estwick, Ph.D., of Prairie View A&M University.

“Contributions by the 21 HBCU campuses in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana continue to be determining factors in improving the quality of life for their stakeholders and fostering community resilience within the wider society during the pandemic,” he said. “Also, the work by HBCUs is paramount to establishing confidence in students, their families and university administrators as they anticipate a smooth transition to planned in-person classes for the Fall 2021 semester.”

Dr. Gary A. Puckrein, Ph.D., CEO and President at National Minority Quality Forum said he commends HBCU students on their resilience during the pandemics, and their drive to reduce patient risk in their communities.

“We have seen the impact that COVID-19 has had on the students, parents and communities—it is inspiring to see HBCU students using their platform to truly give back to and improve the lives of others in their communities.”

Ceeon D. Quiett Smith, Ph.D, Chief of Staff at Benedict College, said that after 12 months of emergency response measures to combat COVID-19, HBCU COVID Awareness Day (HBCU-CARD) represents creative and collective signs of resilience amongst HBCUs to promote vaccinations and overall education in creative and substantial ways.

“Participating in the coordination of HBCU-CARD has been engaging and enlightening, as faculty, staff and government officials work together - with student voices taking the lead to guide our country to a credible recovery from the pandemic,” she said. “As a representative for HBCU students representing the southern region of the United States where health disparities prevail and recovery from crises is historically slow, it has been humbling and a source of pride to hear how connected and concerned HBCU students are, not just for themselves, but for others.”

Dr. Donna Marie Christian-Christensen, former Delegate for U.S. Virgin Islands, said now is the time for HBCU-CARD.

“I have always believed that our students at HBCU's can be a force for the support and change the communities that surround them need. The HBCU-CARD unleashes this at a critical time in all African American and other communities of color.”

Confirmed HBCUs participating in HBCU-CARD as of May 3, 2021 (this is not an exhaustive list of HBCU's that have been active in response and awareness efforts related to COVID-19):

By FEMA Region	College/University Name
Region 2	U.S. Virgin Islands: - University of the U.S. Virgin Islands
Region 3	District of Columbia: - Howard University Maryland: - Bowie State University - Coppin State University - Morgan State University Virginia: - Hampton University - Norfolk State University - Virginia Union University
Region 4	Alabama: - Alabama State University - Alabama A&M University - Miles College - Stillman College - Tuskegee University Florida: - Florida A&M University Georgia: - Atlanta University Center Consortium - Clark Atlanta University - Fort Valley State University - Savannah State University - Spelman College Kentucky: - Kentucky State University Mississippi: - Alcorn State University - Mississippi Valley State University - Rust College North Carolina: - Livingstone College - North Carolina A&T - North Carolina Central University - Shaw University

	<p>South Carolina:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allen University - Benedict College - Claflin University - Elizabeth City State University - Morris College - South Carolina State University <p>Tennessee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fisk University - Meharry Medical College
Region 5	<p>Ohio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wilberforce University
Region 6	<p>Arkansas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff <p>Louisiana:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dillard University - Grambling State University - Southern University - Xavier University <p>Texas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prairie View A&M University - Texas Southern University
Region 7	<p>Missouri:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harris-Stowe State University <p>Nebraska:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lincoln University
Region 9	<p>California:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charles R. Drew University

If you would like to join this effort or learn more, [visit HBCU-CARD online](#), or contact National Co-Chairs Dr. Downer and Marcus Coleman at hbcu.card@gmail.com.

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Media Contact
 Marcus Coleman
hbcu.card@gmail.com
 (520)-271-5609

About HBCU COVID Awareness and Resilience Day

HBCU COVID Awareness and Resilience Day is dedicated to mobilizing COVID-19 literacy by raising awareness of, and taking actions against, COVID-19 by our HBCU students nationwide. So how do we get access, develop trust, and save the lives of our communities? Together, let's ***Know More*** and together ***Do More***. To learn more about HBCU-CARD, which is a part of both the [COVID-19 Community Corps](#) and the [Made to Save Campaign](#), please [visit this link](#).