DISPELLING THE MYTH: HBCU EDITION

MYTH #1- HBCUS ARE NO LONGER NECESSARY

HBCUs provide a stable and nurturing environment for those most at risk of not entering or completing college: low-income, first-generation college students. On average, more than 300,000 students attend HBCUs each year, and 80% of them are African Americans.

MYTH #2- HBCU GRADUATES ARE UNSUCCESSFUL

Over half of all African American professionals are graduates of HBCUs. Notable graduates include Kamala Harris, Oprah, Spike Lee, and Samuel Jackson.

MYTH #3- HBCU ALUMNI ARE ROBBED OF THE ABILITY TO NETWORK

The National Center for Education Statics reports that almost 50,000 students graduated from HBCUs in 2014 alone. Black college graduates work in every field, create businesses at every level and share a common bond through the HBCU experience.

MYTH #4- HBCU STUDENTS RECEIVE AN INFERIOR EDUCATION

A 2015 Gallup report measured five elements of well-being — social, purpose, financial, community and physical — and found that black HBCU grads were "thriving" to a greater degree, in all categories, than their black counterparts who attended other institutions.

MYTH #5- HBCUS WERE FOUNDED BY BLACK PEOPLE

Some of today's most well-known HBCUs were founded by white people. Howard University is named after one of its founders, Gen. Oliver O. Howard, a white Union officer who led the federal Freedmen's Bureau after the Civil War. Spelman College was founded in 1881 as the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary by Sophia B. Packard and Harriet E. Giles, two white teachers from Massachusetts.

MYTH #6- HBCUS LACK DIVERSITY

According to the Department of Education, "In 2014, non-Black students made up 21 percent of enrollment at HBCUs, compared with 15 percent in 1976." White students account for most of the non-black HBCU student population, but schools such as Howard increasingly attract international interest.