

WHERE NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

2023
2024

BETHUNE-COOKMAN
UNIVERSITY
ANNUAL REPORT
OF CONTRIBUTIONS

FISCAL YEAR ENDING
JUNE 30, 2024





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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

“As we look ahead to the next century, I believe that B-CU will continue opening doors and creating opportunities for students in both traditional and cutting-edge fields of employment.”

DEAR WILDCATS,



Every passing year at Bethune-Cookman University represents another step on the long road toward change. But in 2024, we also marked an occasion of special significance: the 120th anniversary of this institution's founding by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune.

When Dr. Bethune led her first class in 1904, she had no classroom to teach in; the young Black women who enrolled in her school met in a local family's home. But as far as we've come since then, everything we are today – a historic campus, a respected institution, and a center of learning, research and achievement – we owe to the legacy of philanthropy and service she championed throughout her life.

In 2024, we announced our new tagline and rallying cry: “Where Nothing Is Impossible.” And as we look ahead to the next century and more of transformative education, servant leadership, and global impact, I believe that B-CU will continue opening doors and creating opportunities for students in both traditional and cutting-edge fields of employment.

Over the last twelve months, hundreds of bright-eyed students began their very first semester of college with anticipation. Others embarked on the next stage of their education or ventured forward into the professional world with the skills they need to be leaders, change-makers and trailblazers. Lives change at B-CU – and that's only possible thanks to you.

To the alumni, family members, and first-time donors who gave what they could to help students on the road to graduation, thank you. To the community and business partners who have opened doors through internships and other experiential learning opportunities, thank you. And to all friends of our university whose steadfast support has allowed Dr. Bethune's dream to grow and flourish for so long, thank you.

Through faith, community and dedication, we can make the impossible possible.



Dr. William Berry, B-CU Acting President/Provost



ABOUT US

Founded in 1904 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU) today sustains her legacy of faith, scholarship and service through its relationship with the United Methodist Church and its commitment to academic excellence and civic engagement. The school achieved University status in 2007 with the launch of a master's degree program in Transformative Leadership, and has since added three additional master's degree offerings. Located in Daytona Beach, Florida, B-CU offers baccalaureate degrees in 37 majors and maintains intercollegiate athletic programs and instrumental and choral groups that have achieved national recognition. The institution boasts a diverse and international faculty and a student body of nearly 3,000.

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

HIGH-LEVEL HEALTHCARE TRAINING

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences celebrated major news in July 2023 with a national ranking by Nurse.org, an online resource for those working in the field or anyone interested in pursuing a career in healthcare. Out of 43 HBCUs with nursing programs, B-CU ranked #2. Under the leadership of Dr. Sandra Tucker, the faith-based approach to nursing education seeks to cultivate leaders who serve, educate and empower patients to achieve optimal wellness.

In January 2024, Halifax Health joined Dean Tucker for

a celebratory luncheon, in which four nursing students received \$10,000 scholarships from the hospital system. Junior Ja'Kayla Cooper and sophomores Taliyah Jackson, Marla Cole and



Ariana Lyles can renew that financial support each year through graduation. They are also guaranteed a nursing job at Halifax Health in the specialty of their choice upon completion of the program.

"Marla, Ariana, Taliyah, and Ja'Kayla exemplify the qualities of professionalism, integrity, reliability, honesty and honor on which we strive to build our program," said Dr. Tucker. "They are not only scholars, but future leaders learning to advocate for opportunities for all people to improve their quality of life through innovative nursing practice."

EXTENDED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The B-CU faculty have reimaged over 35 courses across the University to enhance academic success through experiential learning modules, designed to engage students with hands-on learning strategies aimed at building workforce readiness skills, such as collaboration, communication and problem-solving.

Seven faculty and staff attended the National Society for Experiential Education Conference in September 2023 and attended workshops for certification from the Experiential

Education Academy. Dr. Sarah Krejci presented on B-CU's RISE QEP and the Collaborative Internship Program.

Outside of the classroom, faculty and staff are engaging students to study and solve real world problems with community partners through the RISE Student Experience Program, We Invest in Your Needs Health Projects (Winn-Hp), Transdisciplinary Data Scholars Program, Ecocar EV Challenge, Center for Law and Social Justice, Aquatic Research Laboratory, Protein Society Group, Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems, Data Analytics Alliance for Environmental Intelligence Project (ADAPT-AI), and Strengthening the University through STEM Excellence (STUT-STEMEx).

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

In February 2024, B-CU hosted the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Institute for Capacity Building on campus as part of its partnership with the HBCU Transformation Project – a first-of-its-kind collaboration designed to improve student enrollment, graduate success and institutional effectiveness rates at HBCUs.

Faculty, staff and members of the administration, including Acting President and Provost Dr. William Berry and Executive Vice President Dr. Karen Bearden, participated in the two-day workshop.

B-CU has been a Transformation partner since 2022, focusing on financial sustainability, strategy development and transformation support.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

ACCREDITATION

B-CU remains the only accredited HBCU to offer a master's degree in athletic training following a vote by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) to renew the accreditation at the highest level.

Dr. Torrance Williams, chair of the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and Director of the Master of Athletic Training program says this accreditation is an important part of making sure that more trainers look like the athletes they serve.

a restaurant, instead of managing budgets, controlling costs and coordinating various tasks to ensure operational efficiency.

CELEBRATING RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

Faculty, staff, and students have shared research conducted at B-CU at over 13 professional conferences and symposiums across the country.

The campus celebrated the research excellence of undergraduate and graduate students at the Spring 2024 Academic Showcase with 34 research

presentation in Atmospheric and Ocean Sciences went to Shaunace Bowen, a Sophomore Biology major; and Outstanding undergraduate poster in Engineering went to Aldridge Kalenga, a Junior Computer Science major.

EXPANDING INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

B-CU has provided over 25 paid undergraduate internship opportunities across campus with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Brevard Zoo, and the Marine Discovery Center. Students engage in virtual, hybrid, or face-to-face internships that last between 8 and 16 weeks both during the academic year, and over summer. The internships are available to all academic years and classifications.

SUPPORTING CAREER PATHWAYS

B-CU's Center for Career Success hosted its largest Career Fair in spring 2024 with 70 employers and 620 students in attendance. The event was preceded by a career preparation week that provided students with resume-building assistance, mock interviews, and a dress for success event.

In fall 2023, B-CU hosted its first ever Majors Fair to connect students with faculty and staff from their academic programs. It also provided resources to explore research and internship opportunities as well as career engagement with B-CU's community partners.

Eighteen undergraduate student researchers attended



HOSPITALITY AT ITS FINEST

Cub Paradise reopened in February 2024, marking the first seating since COVID. Beyond a fine dining experience for guests, the restaurant provides hands-on, practical experience for students in the Business Administration Hospitality program. Dr. Ruth A. Smith says working at Cub Paradise gives students real-life experience with what it takes to run

posters presented to the campus.

Highlights include:

- Cyrille Teforlack, Biology Spring 2024 graduate, received the top student award at the Annual Biomedical Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS) for his research on eye regeneration in planaria.
- The Florida Academy of Sciences awarded two prizes to B-CU students at its 2024 Annual Meeting: Outstanding undergraduate oral

the National Career Development Association Conference in San Diego in June 2024. Students participated in presentations, workshops, and were given the opportunity to have headshots taken. Dr. Nina Talley, Director of B-CU's Center for Career Success, gave a presentation focused on how to create spaces for advocacy.

Sustainability

The campus participated in the International Coastal Cleanup in September 2023 at Sun Splash Park, where students and staff helped record data and remove trash along local shorelines.

In April 2024, B-CU hosted its first Earth Month initiative. The University hosted guest speakers, movie nights, and field trips took students on tours of the local landfill and water treatment plant, an organic farm, the beach, and a kayak trip.

The Marine Discovery Center invited B-CU to participate and present sustainability-related research at the ShORE Symposium. Students and staff were also part of the Spring 2024



Academic Showcase.

Summer research students participated in a National Science Foundation IUSE workshop that focused on the Halifax River Estuary water quality.

Civics

Students took to the streets in March 2024 for a voter registration drive organized by Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice Dr. Frank Wood.

The "March Like Mary – Run Me My Ballot" event was organized to help B-CU students understand the power of the local vote and the impact their voices could have on the community they call home for most of the year. Students marched from the Performing Arts Center to Dr. Bethune's statue at the riverside esplanade.

Dr. Wood and other volunteers shuttled students to the Daytona Beach Regional Library where they submitted their registration forms for official logging.

The B-CU Model United Nations club is back, continuing the legacy of Dr. Bethune's legacy of service through diplomacy.

In April 2024, the club – led by Dr. Edoh Agbehonou, Associate Professor of Political Science – traveled to New York to participate in the National Model UN Conference. B-CU represented the Union of Comoros, an East African archipelago off the coast of Mozambique.

The experience provides students with a unique opportunity to sharpen their research, public speaking, and critical thinking skills.



Community

Ten years ago, Dean of Students and Executive Director of Civic Engagement (and proud Class of 1996 alum) Jermaine McKinney set out to find a better way to "empower young men" by giving them tangible examples of the success they can achieve if they stay the course. And thus, the Male Empowerment Symposium was born. The annual capstone initiative brings public figures from around the country together in Daytona Beach to help participants build a network aimed at encouraging them to be the best versions of themselves.

The two-day event in April featured Dr. Charles Gibbs, CEO of the 100 Black Men of America, Inc. and B-CU's own Assistant Director of Student Leadership and Engagement, Mr. Chester Wilson.

DONATIONS

JOHN BRYAN AND L. GALE LEMERAND



overstated," said Dr. William Berry, Provost and Acting President of B-CU. "He has been a friend of the university for many years now, and we are incredibly thankful for his kindness and investment in ensuring our students have access to the best facilities possible."

Lemerand serves as CEO of Stonewood Holdings, the parent company of the Stonewood Grill & Tavern and Peach Valley Café chains, in which he holds majority ownership. He previously donated funds to help construct the L. Gale Lemerand School of Nursing at B-CU, which opened in 2007.

"The entire B-CU community appreciates the support of Mr. L. Gale Lemerand," said Belvin Perry, Jr., Chair of the B-CU Board of Trustees. "This transformative gift will benefit current and future students and is a testament to the enduring values and legacy of our Founder, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune."

A GENEROUS \$1.4 MILLION GIFT

On March 22, Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU) received a generous \$1.4 million donation from local entrepreneur and philanthropist L. Gale Lemerand. The donation is being used

to renovate two buildings on campus that will be known as the L. Gale Lemerand Academic Multiplex and the L. Gale Lemerand Football Complex.

"Mr. Lemerand's generosity and commitment to furthering education in the state of Florida can't be



The L. Gale Lemerand Multiplex and L. Gale Lemerand Football Complex will be used for academic support, meeting and office space, recruiting, athletic locker rooms and other similar purposes to support student athletes.

FIRST PHASE OF CONSTRUCTION

In the fall of 2023, Wildcat Nation celebrated the grand opening of its first turf on-campus practice field. The John L. Bryan Sr. Practice Field, named after one of its primary benefactors, is located behind the Athletic Training Center off International Speedway Boulevard. The first phase of construction invested approximately \$1.4 million into outfitting the land with synthetic turf – designed to extend longevity and lower maintenance costs – goal posts, and other athletic enhancements.

The next fundraising phase is underway to go towards the construction of the Center for Athletic Success, which is set to be built adjacent to the Larry R. Handfield Athletic Training Center. The project will include academic improvement opportunities for students, study hall spaces, a student lounge, team meeting rooms, and support services. The funds will also aid efforts to complete an on-campus football locker room.

“We’re so grateful to our alumni and friends for their continued support for our athletics department,” said B-CU Athletic Director and Head Men’s Basketball Coach Reggie Theus. “Donations not only allow us to expand offerings for student athletes; they build the championship culture that makes us who are at B-CU.”

For more information about how you can make your mark as a supporter of Wildcat athletes, contact the B-CU Athletic Department at (386) 418-2215.

GRADUATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (GAP)

Every graduate of Bethune-Cookman University is a testament to Dr. Bethune’s vision and mission. But putting in the work doesn’t automatically earn a walk across the commencement stage. That’s why the Graduation Assistance Program (GAP) was created: to leverage support from generous donors and eliminate financial obstacles to graduation for college seniors like Jada Troutman and Jephthe Belizaire. In their own words:



“Not only did the B-CU Graduate Assistance Program alleviate some of the financial strain, but it also opened doors to opportunities that I might not otherwise be able to pursue – like internships, research projects and study abroad programs. GAP also reinforced my belief that perseverance and dedication will be rewarded. I too hope to ‘pay it forward’ by contributing positively to my community and society at large.”

**– Jada Troutman
Class of 2024**

“I come from a household where education is the top priority, since my parents are both immigrants who wish nothing but success for their children. While my parents have done their best to help me through many challenges – physical, mental, spiritual and financial – I worried that the cost of education would prevent me from pursuing my career goals. Receiving the Graduation Assistance scholarship gets me one step closer to earning my degree.”

**– Jephthe Belizaire
Rising Senior**

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JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024

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All are greatly appreciated.

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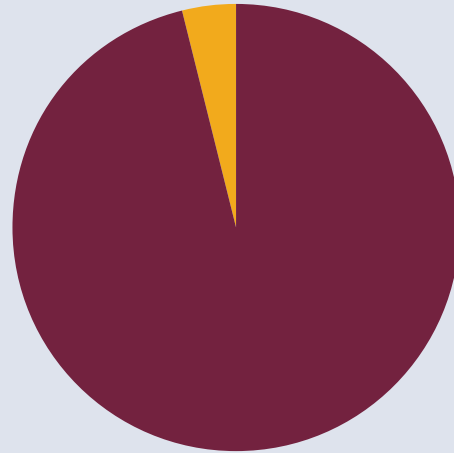
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B-CU IS GUIDED BY ITS CORE VALUES: B-F.I.R.S.T.

F

FAITH

We recognize and uphold the Christian tradition while welcoming the diversity of faiths.

I

INTEGRITY

We live in a way that reflects our deepest convictions.

R

RESPECT

We recognize the inherent dignity and worth of each person.

S

SERVICE

We seek social justice through civic engagement.

T

THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE

We are engaged in the continuous pursuit of learning that transforms us and the world.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Bethune-Cookman University is to educate a diverse community of learners to become responsible, productive citizens and solution seekers through the promotion of faith, scholarship, creative endeavors, leadership and service. All gifts make this possible.



VICE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Philanthropy remains a cornerstone of our mission – and I'm proud to say we've seen an incredible outpouring of generosity across our Wildcat Nation.



DEAR WILDCATS,

We've all heard the story of how, in 1904, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune sold homemade sweet potato pies to raise funds for a school for young Black women in Daytona – the school that would one day become Bethune-Cookman University. That humble, hardworking beginning laid the foundation for Dr. Bethune's philanthropic mindset, uniting people of all races and walks of life in a shared vision for America's future.

As we approach the 120th anniversary of the journey she began, philanthropy remains a cornerstone of our mission – and I'm proud to say we've seen an incredible outpouring of generosity across our Wildcat Nation.

In the last year, we've seen a 28% increase in total annual donations, with 17% of those gifts coming from first-time donors. In just 24 hours, our Day of Giving event raised an incredible \$509,000 – nearly 89% more than the previous year. And we celebrated the largest single gift to our university in ten years: a \$1.4 million gift from philanthropist L. Gale Lemerand.

Thanks to you, we've been able to help our scholars through the Graduation Assistance Program (GAP), which helps students overcome financial barriers to reach graduation. We've made strides toward our donation goal for our 120th anniversary, honoring the legacy of our historic university. And added nearly \$345,000 to Endowment Holding Accounts.

All that we do is made possible by your steadfast support. We are committed to the highest standards for transparency and stewardship, ensuring that every dollar of your gift goes directly to your chosen program and opportunities for Bethune-Cookman University students.

Your contributions empower Wildcats not only to aspire, but to achieve greatness as leaders in business, healthcare, athletics, and more. It's just as our founder once said: "Without faith, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible."

Together, we can advance education and light the path forward for the leaders of tomorrow.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherry Paramore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Sherry Paramore, Vice President
of Institutional Advancement



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