Brick by Brick:

HBCUs Are Using the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program to Fortify the Communities They Serve

By Brittany-Rae Gregory

The Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program

On August 3, 2021, the United States Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration ("NTIA") issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity[1] ("NOFO") for The Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. The initiative is a "$268 million grant program to Historically Black Colleges and Universities ("HBCUs"), Tribal Colleges and Universities ("TCUs"), and Minority-Serving Institutions ("MSIs") for the purchase of broadband Internet access service and eligible equipment or to hire and train information technology personnel."[2] Institutions submitted their applications by December 2021. The Biden-Harris Administration began to announce the funding recipients of the grant program in late 2022.[3] Of the $262,852,127.36 issued, 43 HBCUs received grants from the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program.[4]

Historically Black Colleges and Universities as Anchor Institutions

Under the Higher Education Act of 1965, The United States Department of Education 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 [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."[5]

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[1] National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *Notice of Funding Opportunity Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program*, (Aug. 3, 2021), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/CMC%20Pilot%20Program%20NOFO%20Amendment%20%2811-9-2021%29.pdf.

[2] National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *Connecting Minority Communities Program Overview*, (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/funding-programs/connecting-minority-communities.

[3] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[4] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[5] The United States Department of Education, *What is an HBCU?*, https://sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/one-hundred-and-five-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/ (last visited Aug. 18, 2023).

Service is integral to the HBCU experience. In fact, most HBCUs reference service in their institutional mottos. These mottos serve as a constant reminder that the schools exist to not only educate the students on their campus but are also responsible for using their resources to uplift the various communities that they serve.

Figure I. Southern University at Baton Rouge, Southern University Office of Communications, https://www.subr.edu/

For instance, Southern University Agricultural and Mechanical College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana's motto is "Serving the State, the Nation and the World,[6]" a clear emphasis that the students are supposed to go forth and use their knowledge to better the community. At Baltimore's Morgan State University, students and faculty aim to play a part in "Growing the Future, Leading the World.[7]" Other institutions like North Carolina's Fayetteville State University may have less overt statements of their commitment to community advancement via their motto "Res Non Verba," a Latin phrase that means "Deeds Not Words[8]" in English translation. However, their motto makes their "emphasis on civic and social responsibility" clear.[9] With a focus on identifying and addressing the unique needs of residents, HBCUs are considered anchor institutions in their respective communities.

While there are various ways that HBCUs help strengthen their communities as anchor institutions, economic vitality is a critical measure of their enrichment. In a 2017 report, the United Negro College Fund ("UNCF") found that HBCUs created 134,090 jobs and generated $14.8 billion annually in their local communities.[10]

The Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") defines Community Anchor Institutions as "schools, libraries, medical and healthcare providers, public safety entities, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations and agencies that provide outreach, access, equipment, and support services to facilitate greater use of

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[6] HBCU Lifestyle, *Southern University and A&M College,* https://hbculifestyle.com/hbcu-colleges-list/southern-university-and-agricultural-mechanical-college/ (last visited Aug. 18, 2023).

[7] Morgan State University, *Morgan State University,* https://www.morgan.edu/ (last visited Aug. 18, 2023).

[8] Fayetteville State University, *Reach Out and Make an Impact,* https://www.uncfsu.edu/campus-life/our-campus#:~:text=Res%20Non%20Verba.,to%20community%20service%20each%20year (last visited Aug. 18, 2023).

[9] Fayetteville State University, *Reach Out and Make an Impact,* https://www.uncfsu.edu/campus-life/our-campus#:~:text=Res%20Non%20Verba.,to%20community%20service%20each%20year (last visited Aug. 18, 2023).

[10] The United Negro College Fund., *HBCUs Make America Strong: The Positive Economic Impact of Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (2017), https://cdn.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/HBCU_Consumer_Brochure_FINAL_APPROVED.pdf?_ga=2.53414120.1526152130.1692224426-1822633407.1692224426.

broadband service by vulnerable populations, including low-income, the unemployed, and the aged."[11] Black anchor institutions such as HBCUs play a critical role in helping to provide digital literacy training, devices, and services for residents in predominantly-Black communities.

In fact, two of the fund recipients, Benedict College and Coppin State University, have been recognized for their role as anchor institutions by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the past.[12]

Figure II. Tom Holdsworth, Baltimore Business Journal (March 16, 2023), https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2023/03/16/coppin-state-new-dorm-baltimore-on-campus-living.html

HBCUs and Digitally Divided Black Neighborhoods

According to a 2021 report by McKinsey & Company, 82% of HBCUs are located in broadband deserts.[13] Broadband deserts are "areas where high-speed Internet services are limited or entirely unavailable."[14] The high number of HBCUs located in neighborhoods with known barriers to broadband connectivity tracks with well-documented information about persistent digital divides along racial lines.

Sixty-two percent of Black adults said they had a broadband connection compared to 77% of their White counterparts. Additionally, 69% of Black Americans own a computer compared to 80% of White Americans, and 50% of

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[11] *Federal Communications Commission Record* (FCC Rcd.), Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing an Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board, GN Docket No. 96-45, 09-51,03-109,05-337,10-90,01-92,07-135, 10-208, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC Rcd 17663 (22) (2011).

[12] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Anchor Institutions: HBCUs Leading the Way to Community Transformation*, Partners in Progress eNewsletter (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://archives.huduser.gov/partners-newsletter/newsletter_072314_2.html.

[13] McKinsey Institute for Black Economic Mobility, *How HBCUs Can Accelerate Black Economic Mobility*, McKinsey & Company Blog (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/how-hbcus-can-accelerate-black-economic-mobility.

[14] Marcus Torry, *Overcoming Broadband Deserts,* Medium (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://accessinnovate.medium.com/overcoming-broadband-deserts-comprehensive-solutions-for-underserved-areas-899635ab543d#:~:text=These%20regions%20are%20typically%20found,internet%20service%20providers%20(ISPs).

Black Americans indicated that they had the digital skills necessary to thrive in society compared to 77% of White Americans asked the same question. Furthermore, 40% of Black households do not have high-speed fixed broadband in comparison to 28% of White households.[15] These statistics point to tangible contributors to the digital divide that exists within many predominately-Black neighborhoods and communities across the country. Digital inequality, directly and indirectly, affect so many things – from education to job opportunities to healthcare and everything in between.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's funding for minority communities intends to elevate community partners and work toward closing deep-rooted digital divides. Each institution that applied for the funding outlined specific goals that they hope to achieve over the two-year period of the grant. Though each institution has considered the unique needs of the communities and populations they serve, the future institutional work plans fit into one of the following categories: community building, infrastructure expansion, upskilling the campus population, and device distribution.

Community Building

Uplifting the neighborhoods and areas that the HBCUs serve is central to the overall goal of the Connecting Minority Communities Program. Grantees identified various routes to increase broadband access and adoption at the local level.
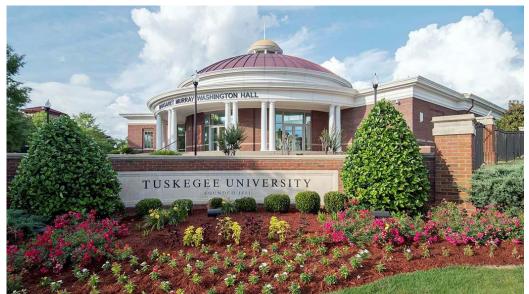

Figure III. Tuskegee University, Tuskegee University Archives (2010), https://archive.tuskegee.edu/repository/

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[15] McKinsey & Company, *Closing the Digital Divide in Black America*, McKinsey & Company Blog (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/closing-the-digital-divide-in-black-america

Accurate Data Collection

Baltimore's Coppin State University determined that it was critical to perform assessments that would provide more accurate data about the level of resident connectivity and digital resource needs among residents in their communities. Coppin will use a portion of their funding for their Cyber Security Awareness Program participants to map broadband availability and readiness within the community.[16] The institution will also partner with the Baltimore County Health Department and several local health organizations to implement a health and connectivity needs assessment for Lochearn, Milford Mill, and Woodlawn, three predominately-Black communities in the Baltimore area. The assessment will ultimately help determine how technology such as telehealth communications could be used to address existing health inequities.[17]

Broadband Internet for the Community

To build upon their data collection, Coppin State University will also address access and adoption in the West North Avenue Corridor of Baltimore City by providing affordable broadband Internet to residents. Coppin students trained as Digital Navigators by Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Library will help residents identify service provider options and learn to use digital technologies to their fullest capacity.[18]

Similarly, Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) plans to use their allocation to support their Building a Digital Pipeline to Prosperity Initiative. Through this program, the University will provide free Wi-Fi for the FAMU campus and the southside of Tallahassee, a historically Black and underserved area.[19]

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[16] Press Release, Coppin State University, Coppin State University Receives $3.9 Million Grant for New Broadband Internet Pilot Program (Jan. 3, 2023), http://www.coppin.edu/news/coppin-state-university-receives-39-million-grant-new-broadband-internet-pilot-program.

[17] Press Release, Coppin State University, Coppin State University Receives $3.9 Million Grant for New Broadband Internet Pilot Program (Jan. 3, 2023), http://www.coppin.edu/news/coppin-state-university-receives-39-million-grant-new-broadband-internet-pilot-program ppin.edu/news/coppin-state-university-receives-39-million-grant-new-broadband-internet-pilot-program.

[18] Press Release, Coppin State University, Coppin State University Receives $3.9 Million Grant for New Broadband Internet Pilot Program (Jan. 3, 2023), http://www.coppin.edu/news/coppin-state-university-receives-39-million-grant-new-broadband-internet-pilot-program.

[19] Tarah Jean, FAMU receives $5.4 million to provide free, high-speed internet to southside Tallahassee, *Tallahassee Democrat* (March 8, 2023), https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/local/famu-news/2023/03/08/famu-grant-to-provide-free-high-speed-internet-to-south-tallahassee/69957288007/.

Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) intends to use their funding to provide Internet access for students in the K-12 education system. Through their "SUNOconnects" program, SUNO plans to provide training and greater broadband access to the campus and designated K-12 schools in the city's 9th and 15th Wards.[20]

Figure IV. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, About FAMU, https://www.famu.edu/about-famu/index.php

Creating Community Technology Incubators

Some institutions determined that providing residents with spaces where they could receive technology support and consulting services would help increase digital literacy and skills among the population.

Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina, will use their funding to help launch the Charlotte Inclusive Tech-Innovation Pilot. The institution hopes that "broadband 5G deployment will help build a bridge between JCSU and our community."[21] The Charlotte Inclusive Tech-Innovation Pilot will host training sessions for the surrounding community, University students and staff, and bootcamps in analytics, and the program will allow small community businesses to use the Smith-Tech Innovation Center on campus.[22]

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[20] Zach Labbe, SUNO announces $3M grant to improve internet access, *WGNO* (March 21, 2023), https://wgno.com/news/local/suno-announces-3m-grant-to-improve-internet-access/.

[21] Press Release, Johnson C. Smith University, Johnson C. Smith University Receives Largest Government Grant in the Institution's History (Feb. 15, 2023), https://www.jcsu.edu/news/johnson-c-smith-university-receives-largest-government-grant-institutions-history.

[22] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

At Paul Quinn College in Dallas, Texas, the funds will be used to launch the Quinnite Community Digital Learning Center. The center will serve as an information technology learning and support hub for residents and students from two local schools will be able to check out loaner laptops.[23]
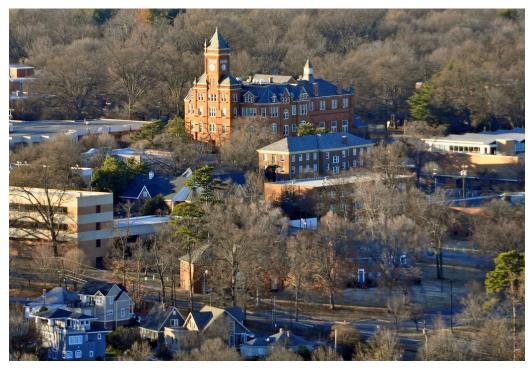

Figure V. James Willamor, Blackpast (February 12, 2011),
https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/johnson-c-smith-university-1867/

Upskilling The Campus Population

Using Virtual Reality Technology to Develop a Digitally Literate and Capable Generation

Grant recipients determined that next-level digital capabilities are critical to helping close the digital divide within the predominantly-Black communities that they serve. In theory, when someone is specially trained, they can not only use that knowledge to create new opportunities, but over time the spread of that particular point of knowledge will help create a norm within the served communities.

[23] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

Two schools cited plans to use their funds to bring a virtual-reality-centered curriculum to their respective campuses geared toward preparing educators for the classrooms of the future and exposing community members to curricula and learning modules that would help increase their digital literacy and comfort with using digital technology for everyday tasks.

Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, outlined the details of their plans for the Southern University Reaching Across the Digital Divide (SURADD) project which will: "The project will:

(1) Develop a broadband-accessible digital infrastructure for mobile and stationary environments, immersing the local community in hands-on, inquiry-based teaching and learning experiences using high quality digital content (VR simulations, CAVE simulations, streaming/gaming) through broadband accessible/IT gateways to provide digital skills building towards workforce capacity;

(2) Create virtual reality (VR)-infused curricula that meet National Science Standards for middle school students; through virtualization activities, project faculty and staff will provide equitable access to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning experiences for all students; and

(3) Train teacher candidates and clinical educators in the use of the VR environment and incorporating the infused curricula in the classroom, transforming education into an interactive space for strengthened STEM teaching and learning using the animated video format."[24]

Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical University (PVAMU) also indicated plans for training students on the education track in the latest virtual reality technology.[25] These skills would prove especially beneficial for students as they learn to live and operate in our increasingly digital society.

Diversifying the Cybersecurity Landscape

Diversifying cybersecurity is critical to moving the field forward. Varied perspectives bring nimbleness to a field where new challenges and attacks are around every corner. According to the 2021 Aspen Institute Report *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Cybersecurity,* only 8% of cybersecurity professionals are Black. Education is cited as one of the significant barriers that prevent more Black people from pursuing a career in cybersecurity.[26]

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[24] Press Release, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More than $18.5 Million in Internet for All Grants to Five Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Dec. 16 ,2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-185-million-internet-all-grants-five.

[25] PVAMU receives grant to establish AirPanther Next Gen Network as Part of Biden-Harris 'Internet for All' initiative, (May 31, 2023), https://www.pvamu.edu/blog/pvamu-receives-grant-to-establish-air-panther-nextgen-network-as-part-of-biden-harris-internet-for-all-initiative/

[26] Aspen Tech Policy Hub, *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Cybersecurity* (last visited Aug. 18, 2023),

Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, is hoping to address the cybersecurity gaps by prioritizing cybersecurity education for their students, faculty, and community members through their Building Bridges to Cyber Operations and Digital Equity (CODE) Project. This initiative will fund: "(1) outreach and research activities for the Center for Cybersecurity Education and Research; (2) expand the number of faculty in computer science to grow the Cyber Operations program; (3) purchase computer equipment to offer students virtual hardware for use throughout the Cyber Operations degree program, which was launched in fall 2022; (4) purchase computer equipment to establish a research and study lab; and (5) support undergraduate researchers to participate in cybersecurity-related research."[27]

Figure VI. Shaw University, Soul of America, https://www.soulofamerica.com/black-colleges/shaw-university/

https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-in-Cybersecurity_9.921.pdf

[27] Press Release, Shaw University Receives $5 Million Technology Financial Assistance Grant to Build Cyber Operations Program, (Mar. 6,2023), https://news.shawu.edu/press-release/shaw-university-receives-5-million-technology-financial-assistance-grant-to-build-cyber-operations-program/.

Infrastructure Expansion and Device Distribution

The most common use for the funds among all grantees was for updating broadband infrastructure on campus and providing students with digital devices to own and/or lease.

The ConnecTUvity: Anchoring the Future of Tuskegee with Broadband Technology program at Tuskegee University in Alabama intends to use funds to complete the installation of new fiber optic cables that will connect 78 buildings on campus to the recently upgraded networking equipment. Additionally, the funds will help install over 1,200 wireless access points on campus.[28]

Figure VII. The University of Maryland at Eastern Shore, About UMES, https://wwwcp.umes.edu/about/

At the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, recipients are using their funds for a similar project titled "Rebuilding Our Digital Road: Digital Infrastructure Re-imagining" project. The initiative includes: (1) expanding broadband Internet access and connectivity to UMES residence halls, student centers, and key STEM academic buildings; (2) connecting UMES' most dynamic and innovative education and community outreach programs with the broadband capacity to increase their value as access points for students and community members; and (3) assessing UMES' service to its students (on and off campus) and its position in the Maryland University System and anchor community in relation to its broadband capacity and digital infrastructure.[29]

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[28] Press Release, Tuskegee awarded more than $3.5 million for technology, connectivity upgrades, (Mar. 2, 2023), https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/tuskegee-awarded-more-than-35-million-for-technology-connectivity-upgrades.

[29] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-

In Charlotte Amalie, the University of the Virgin Islands plans to focus on campus connectivity through their UVI Technology Innovations: expanding network capacity and resilience to foster creativity, enhancing cybersecurity, and improving access to resources for learning projects. The project goals include replacing fiber optic cables and routers. The school also plans to commission architectural renderings of residence halls and buildings to optimize Wi-Fi access points placement.[30]

Continuing Community Work After the Two-Year Time Period

The first round of HBCUs have received a record level of grant funding through NTIA's Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. In order to continue the work after the initial grant period has ended and potentially make the case for additional funding in subsequent Congressional budgets, it is important to consider the following recommendations.

1. Use New Data to Expand Research

Because of the parameters of the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program, the selected schools will likely maintain detailed documentation of what worked and what did not work during the grant period. To expand upon the available information about programming, NTIA should host and/or sponsor regional focus groups to pinpoint what longstanding funding for a program of this magnitude should look like.

2. Create Templates for Program Implementation

If the goal is to expand the program to provide funding for more HBCUs in years to come, it is important that they use the documentation to templatize best practices as schools dive deeper into their communities' unique broadband access and adoption needs.

3. Make Report Findings Available to Future Applicants

administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61.

[30] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61.

NTIA should provide a platform where institutions can share the initial results of their implemented programming with future applicants. A three-part webinar series would be ideal for past program participants to share their findings. The series could be [A] Community-centered initiatives; [B] Infrastructure and Device-focused programs; and [C] Digital Skills and Workforce

4. Fostering Digital Skills in the Workforce

Several institutions indicated that funds would be used to explore and instruct students about emerging technologies and skills that would prove beneficial in the workforce of the future. Findings from these institutions' programs should be compiled into a report shared widely with federal agencies and employers working to increase diversity in the workforce, especially in technology-focused industries.

5. Connecting Communities

A few institutions specifically indicated they wanted to provide broadband for K-12 schools and/or homes in their communities. This stood out because this is a step further than providing an on-campus space where community members can come to access the Internet and/or borrow digital devices. A case study should be conducted on the first two years of these programs and the methods used to engage, educate, and establish trust with residents.

References

The following section provides the details of each institution's intended use of allocated funds from the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. Many of the schools intend to use funds to provide resources and digital skills training to residents in the communities where they are located. Additionally, several institutions indicated that funds would be used to explore and instruct students about emerging technologies and skills that would prove beneficial in the workforce of the future. Findings from these institutions' programs should be compiled into a report shared widely with federal agencies and employers working to increase diversity in the workforce, especially in technology-focused industries.

Alabama State University (Montgomery, Alabama): $2,999,695.37

Founded in the wake of the Civil War by nine recently-freed enslaved men, Alabama State University was at the forefront of innovation as the first state-sponsored Black higher education liberal arts institution.[31] Through their "Broadening Access through Community, Connectivity, and Education" (BRACCE) program, ASU will expand campus Internet access and increase online courses and programs for students.[32]

Albany State University (Albany, Georgia): $2,997,777.[33]

Since 1907 Albany State University has been committed to addressing the unique needs of its student body and surrounding community since its inception.[34] Albany State plans to use funding to build out campus broadband infrastructure for students both on and off campus and purchase devices, educational software, internet access services, and other IT software and hardware for low-income students.[35]

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[31] Alabama State University, *About ASU, https://www.alasu.edu/about-asu/about-asu* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[32] Press Release, Alabama State University, ASU Receives $2.9 Million Federal Grant to Expand Broadband Internet Access for its Campus and the Community, (Mar. 1, 2023), https://www.alasu.edu/asu-29-million-grant-expands-broadband-internet-access.

[33] National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *Connecting Minority Communities Program Overview: Albany State University*, (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://internet4all.gov/funding-recipients/albany-state-university.

[34] Albany State University, *History of Albany State University, https://www.asurams.edu/history.php* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[35] Press Release, Albany State University, Albany State University Awarded $2.9 Million for Connecting Minority Communities Program in Broadband Expansion, (Nov. 2, 2022), https://www.asurams.edu/news/2022/cmc.php.

American Baptist Theological Seminary (Nashville, Tennessee): $2,992,248.23

American Baptist Theological Seminary was established to educate Black ministers during a time when Blacks were barred from other seminaries.[36] The school remains committed to educating the next generation of leaders and providing them with adequate resources to foster their interests. American Baptist plans to use the funds for campus technology upgrades; equipment; training for students, staff and faculty; community connectivity technology and programs; improving the equipment and capacity of on campus and community site training centers.[37]

Benedict College (Columbia, South Carolina): $2,893,457

Benedict College is "a place of full-time learning."[38] In order to foster this vision, the Institution will use the funds to (1) Improve information technology infrastructure; (2) Establish a community learning center where residents will be able to check out loaner devices.[39]

Bennett College (Greensboro, North Carolina): $ 699,950

As one of two all-women's HBCUs, developing future business leaders is one of Bennett College's areas of focus. In fact, Bennett is the first and only women's college to have a Women's Business Center located on campus.[40] Bennett will use their funding to: Improve campus Wi-Fi; Expand instruction and remote learning opportunities in Greensboro's Census tract 112; and create the Entrepreneurship, Coding, and Artificial Intelligence for Members of the Community Program (E Camp) to offer on-campus and remote hybrid certificate programs to train community members and students in entrepreneurship, coding and artificial intelligence.[41]

Central State University (Wilberforce, Ohio): $ 3,000,000

Ohio's Central State University is the country's oldest private HBCU and served as a stop on the Underground Railroad.[42] The University plans to use funding to address the digital

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[36] American Baptist College, *A Rich History,* https://abcnash.edu/about/history/#1532528105521-0448547e-f730 (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[37] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61
[38] Benedict College, *Mission & Vision,* https://benedict.edu/about-benedict/mission-vision/ (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[39] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61
[40] Bennett College, *About Bennett,* https://www.bennett.edu/about/ (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[41] Press Release, Bennett College, Bennett College receives $700,000 Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program grant to expand remote learning, (Mar. 7, 2023), https://www.bennett.edu/news/bennett-college-receives-national-telecommunications-information-administration-connecting-minority-communities-pilot-program-grant/
[42] Central State University, *Our History and Traditions,* https://www.centralstate.edu/about-csu/our-history-and-traditions (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

divide through two strategic programs - Connections: Central State's Student and Communities Project (CCC), which will: "work with selected community organizations within the Miami Valley region committed to increasing online education and telehealth services, along with workforce and digital skills development."[43]

Claflin University (Orangeburg, South Carolina): $ 2,999,450

Claflin University broke barriers as the first institution of higher learning in South Carolina that accepted students regardless of gender, race, or religious affiliation.[44] Today, the University will use the funding to (1) Upgrade the broadband in campus residential halls and business buildings as well as upgrading wireless access points; and (2) launch the Student Technology Equity Program (STEP) and the Digital Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program.[45]

Coppin State University (Baltimore, Maryland): $ 3,990,880

Coppin State University's original mission focused on uplifting the residents in the surrounding area, and that mission continues in the present day.[46] The school will use their funds for the "ConnectEagle Nation" pilot program. The program will provide resources, training, and access to affordable broadband Internet service to residents in Baltimore's West North Avenue Corridor.

Drake State and Technological College (Huntsville, Alabama): $ 2,413,182

Since its inception, Drake State and Technical College has put advancing the technological skills of the Black community at the forefront.[47] The school will use the funds to provide students with laptops; increasing at-home broadband access; a mobile cyber-lab learning bus; partner with two other universities, Alabama A&M University to implement secure, online student access to learning, teaching, and research resources, such as the library, mental health services, or information on food assistance, and Western Governors University to expand access to a National Security Agency (NSA) and U.S. Department of Homeland Security certified cyber defense degree program in cybersecurity.

[43]National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *Connecting Minority Communities Program Overview: Central State University*, (last visited Mar. 3, 2024), https://www.internetforall.gov/funding-recipients/central-state-university.
[44] Claflin University, *History, https://www.claflin.edu/about/history* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[45] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[46] Coppin State University, *The History of Coppin State University , https://www.coppin.edu/csu-history* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[47] Drake State Community and Technical College, *History, https://drakestate.edu/about/history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

Elizabeth City State University (Elizabeth City, North Carolina): $ 2,131,383

Elizabeth City State University centers economic, social, and environmental progress.[48] The University will use funds to (1) Update school broadband infrastructure and (2) partner with community organizations to help provide reliable broadband access and devices to members of the surrounding community.[49]

Fayetteville State University (Fayetteville, North Carolina): $ 4,933,021

Established by the City's Black community to educate their children, Fayetteville State University remains committed to using education to uplift the community.[50] The University will use funding to bolster their Expand Deployment of Pivotal Technologies (EDOPT) program which will train student interns to assist businesses with their connectivity; expand remote instruction capacity; expand virtual reality technology in selected science labs; and provide laptops and hotspots to students in need.[51]

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (Tallahassee, Florida): $ 5,395,000

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University was recently ranked the Top Public HBCU for the fifth consecutive year by U.S. News and World Report.[52] With their funds, The University plans to launch the "Building a Digital Pipeline to Prosperity" initiative. FAMU intends to provide free, reliable Wi-Fi for the FAMU campus and the southside of Tallahassee, a historically Black and underserved area of the city. The program is planned to launch in November 2023.[53]

Fort Valley State University (Fort Valley, Georgia): $ 2,997,558

Part of Fort Valley State University's mission is to "use knowledge to improve the lives of students and non-students alike."[54] The University will use its funding to support the "Communi-versity: Piloting an Ecosystem for Digital Equity" initiative. The program will teach about broadband and tangible digital technologies skills to students and residents

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[48] Elizabeth City State University, *About ECSU, https://www.ecsu.edu/about/index.php* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[49] Press Release, Elizabeth City State University, Elizabeth City State University awarded $2.1 million grant to expand high-speed connectivity in underserved communities, (Feb. 1, 2023), https://ncnewsline.com/briefs/elizabeth-city-state-university-awarded-2-1-million-grant-to-expand-high-speed-connectivity-in-underserved-communities/
[50] Fayetteville State University, *About FSU, https://www.uncfsu.edu/about-fsu* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[51] Press Release, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville State University Awarded Nearly $5 Million as Part of Internet for All Initiative's Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program, (Mar. 3, 2023), https://www.uncfsu.edu/fayetteville-state-university-awarded-nearly-5-million-as-part-of-internet-for-all-initiatives-connecting-minority-communities-pilot-program
[52] Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, *About FAMU, https://www.famu.edu/about-famu/index.php* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[53] Tarah Jean, FAMU receives $5.4 million to provide free, high-speed internet to southside Tallahassee, *Tallahassee Democrat* (March 8, 2023), https://www.tallahassee.com/story/news/local/famu-news/2023/03/08/famu-grant-to-provide-free-high-speed-internet-to-south-tallahassee/69957288007/.
[54] Fort Valley State University, *About FVSU, https://www.fvsu.edu/about-fvsu/about-fvsu* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

in the surrounding community. The program is expected to roll out in the fall of 2023 after students and faculty are trained.[55]

Grambling State University (Grambling, Louisiana): $ 2,218,696

Grambling State University's motto is "Where everybody is somebody."[56] The institution will continue to embrace this motto through their "Meeting the Needs of Underrepresented Communities by Providing Broadband Access and Training" project supported by the NTIA funding. The project includes on-campus Internet access; cyber security training for students; expanding online course availability; telemedicine training for healthcare and social work faculty; telehealth conferences.[57]

Jarvis Christian College (Hawkins, Texas): $ 1,183,089

With a mission to prepare lifelong learners,[58] Jarvis Christian College intends to use the allocated funds will be used for the College's Digital Literacy and Access Project. The initiative will update the campus broadband network; install computer stations and new technology in the campus Texas Workforce Commission building; and purchase digital devices and hotspots for student use.[59]

Johnson C. Smith University (Charlotte, North Carolina): $ 5,720,896

Johnson C. Smith University has been at the forefront of campus technology initiatives among HBCUs for decades. In 2000 they were the first HBCU to provide an IBM laptop to every student under their IBM Laptop Initiative Program.[60] Continuing that legacy, JCSU will use their allocated funds to launch the Charlotte Inclusive Tech-Innovation Pilot. Through the Charlotte Inclusive Tech-Innovation Pilot, JCSU will host training sessions for students, staff, and the community; hold bootcamps in analytics; upgrade the campus Wi-Fi network from 3G to 5G; and bring small community businesses into the on-campus Smith-Tech Innovation Center.[61]

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[55] Caleesha Moore, Fort Valley residents hope $3M grant can help with broadband woes, *13WMAZ* (March 1, 2023), https://www.13wmaz.com/article/news/local/fort-valley-residents-hope-3m-grant-help-with-broadband-woes/93-dfb729d9-4560-408d-bce3-38677ff556fa.

[56] Grambling State University, *Introduction*, https://www.gram.edu/academics/catalog/2019_2020_Catalog/introduction.php#:~:text=The%20university%20advances%20the%20study,their%20respective%20major%20academic%20disciplines (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[57] Press Release, Grambling State University, Grambling State receives $2.2M grant to boost broadband services, (Feb. 13, 2023), https://www.gram.edu/news/index.php/2023/02/14/grambling-state-receives-2-2m-grant-to-boost-broadband-services/

[58] Jarvis Christian University, *Mission Statement, https://www.jarvis.edu/mission* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[59] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[60] Johnson C. Smith University, *The History of Johnson C. Smith University, https://www.jcsu.edu/who-we-are/our-history* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[61] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-

Lane College (Jackson, Tennessee): $ 472,005.08

Founded in 1882 by the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Lane College's mission is to educate the whole student.[62] The funds will contribute to the College's Digital Equity & Innovation Project which will update the campus broadband network and develop the Dream and Innovation Center, a new workforce development and training space.[63]

Lincoln University of Missouri (Jefferson City, Missouri): $ 2, 980, 070. 84

Lincoln University is the only institution founded by soldiers of the 62nd and 65th United States Colored Infantry, many of the members were formerly enslaved men determined to further their education in a segregated society.[64] Funds will be used for LU Connects: Connecting Lincoln University Students Through Enhanced Technology and Internet Access. Through the initiative, Internet connectivity will be updated to increase reliability; campus technology will be upgraded to allow for better distance learning opportunities; students will receive Chromebooks and hotspots; and a student technology coordinator will be hired.[65]

Lincoln University of Pennsylvania (Lincoln University, Pennsylvania): $ 2, 998, 303

Founded in 1854, Lincoln University is the country's first degree granting HBCU.[66] Their Build and Continually Enhance Digital Capacity for Desired and Sustained Outcomes Project has two main goals: build and enhance an effective broadband and IT capacity; and provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support for students and other university stakeholders.[67]

Morehouse School of Medicine (Atlanta, Georgia): $ 4, 231, 058

The Morehouse School of Medicine has a mission to serve people of color and underserved Georgia communities.[68] The funds will be used for the "From Survivor to

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[62] Lane College, *History of Lane College, https://www.lanecollege.edu/about/history-of-lane-college* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[63] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61
[64] Lincoln University of Missouri, *Leave a Legacy, https://www.lincolnu.edu/about-lincoln/advancement/leave-a-legacy.html* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[65] Press Release, Lincoln University of Missouri, Lincoln University of Missouri Students to Benefit from $2.9 Million National Telecommunications and Information Administration Grant, (Dec. 19, 2022), https://www.lincolnu.edu/news/2022/12/ntia-grant.html
[66] Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, *Admissions, https://www.lincoln.edu/admissions/index.html* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[67] National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *Connecting Minority Communities Program Overview: Lincoln University*, (last visited Aug. 18, 2023), https://www.internetforall.gov/funding-recipients/lincoln-university.
[68] Morehouse School of Medicine, *About Morehouse School of Medicine, https://www.msm.edu/about_us/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

Innovator: Digital Health Equity and Community Impact Grant" initiative. The program will connect residents in the West End neighborhood where Morehouse is located. The project administrators hope that their work helps to increase technological access and literacy, and ultimately impacts digital health equity among residents and the population served by the medical school.[69]

Morgan State University (Baltimore, Maryland): $ 4, 115, 616

As part of their mission, Morgan State University prioritizes solving societal issues that are prevalent in urban communities like Baltimore.[70] With allocated funding from NTIA, they will implement their META (Miles of Education through Technology Access) Zones project. Through this project they will: (1) Upgrade the WiFi infrastructure on campus; (2) Provide laptops and subsidized Internet subscriptions to students and members of the lower-income communities that they serve.[71]

North Carolina Central University (Durham, North Carolina): $ 2, 996, 134

Established in 1910, North Carolina Central University is the country's first state-supported liberal arts college founded for Black students.[72] Through their Digital Equity Leadership Program (DELP), NCCU plans to help teach digital literacy skills to members of the community and expand access, connectivity, and adoption at the University.[73]

Paul Quinn College (Dallas, Texas): $ 2, 999, 677.18

Paul Quinn College's ethos is "We over Me," which encourages students to always consider communal needs before individual needs.[74] Paul Quinn will use the funds to launch the Quinnite Community Digital Learning Center, which will (1) create a full-service information technology department and (2) build a Community Digital Learning Center that will provide an information technology learning and support center and loaner laptops for students in two area schools and the general community.[75]

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[69] Press Release, Morehouse School of Medicine, MSM receives $4.2M federal grant for digital health equity and community impact project, (Mar. 22, 2023), https://www.msm.edu/RSSFeedArticles/2023/March/GrantFunding.php

[70] Morgan State University, *Mission & Values, https://www.morgan.edu/about/mission-and-values* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[71] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[72] North Carolina Central University, *Our Heritage, https://www.nccu.edu/we-are-nc-central/our-heritage* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[73] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces $10.6 Million in Internet for All Grants to Five Minority Serving Colleges and Universities, (Oct. 5, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-106-million-internet-all-grants-five

[74] Paul Quinn College, *Mission, Vision & History, https://paulquinn.edu/mission-vision-history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[75] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-

Philander Smith University (Little Rock, Arkansas): $ 2, 999, 903

Founded in 1877, Philander Smith is one of the first institutions west of the Mississippi river established for formerly enslaved individuals.[76] The school intends to use the funds to (1)implement campus enterprise-level resources, (2) refresh technology for both students and employees, (3) purchase Internet access service, install and upgrade broadband facilities, and improve wireless connectivity, (4) provide eligible devices/equipment will for student use and (5) launch a Wi-Fi hotspot lending program that would allow community residents to check out technology for their own educational purposes.[77]

Prairie View A&M University (Prairie View, Texas): $ 3,000,000

Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical University was Texas' first state-supported college established for Blacks.[78] The school will use the funds for their Air Panther NextGen Network Project. The University outlines the intended outcomes of the project below: smart classroom and broadband infrastructure upgrades;Virtual-reality classroom training series for teachers; Online platform for non-traditional students; Hempstead ISD technology assistance and improvements; and digital skills training programs for students and residents of Hempstead and Prairie View.[79]

Shaw University (Raleigh, North Carolina): $ 5,072,045

Established in 1865, Shaw University is the first HBCU in the Southern United States.[80] With the grant, the University will launch their Building Bridges to Cyber Operations and Digital Equity (CODE) Project. This initiative will fund outreach and research for the Center for Cybersecurity Education and Research; expand the faculty in computer science to grow the Cyber Operations program; computer equipment for student use throughout the Cyber Operations degree program; computer equipment to establish a research and study lab; and support undergraduate cyber security researchers.[81]

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[76] Philander Smith University, *History Through the Years, https://www.philander.edu/about/history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[77] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces $10.6 Million in Internet for All Grants to Five Minority Serving Colleges and Universities, (Oct. 5, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-106-million-internet-all-grants-five

[78] Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical University, *College History, https://www.pvamu.edu/about_pvamu/college-history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[79] https://www.pvamu.edu/blog/pvamu-receives-grant-to-establish-air-panther-nextgen-network-as-part-of-biden-harris-internet-for-all-initiative/

[80] Shaw University, *Welcome, https://www.shawu.edu/about_shaw/?section=about-shaw* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[81] Press Release, Shaw University, Shaw University Receives $5 Million Technology Financial Assistance Grant to Build Cyber Operations Program, (Mar. 6, 2023), https://news.shawu.edu/press-release/shaw-university-receives-5-million-technology-financial-assistance-grant-to-build-cyber-operations-program/

Simmons College of Kentucky (Louisville, Kentucky): $ 2,762,100

Simmons College of Kentucky is Kentucky's first HBCU.[82] Funds will be used for a digital teaching and learning center on campus serving students, faculty and the surrounding community. The center will also share Internet access with two local neighborhoods through community partnerships.[83]

Southern University A&M College (Baton Rouge, Louisiana): $ 6,227,200

Southern University was incorporated in 1880 and its first student enrolled in 1881.[84] The funds will be used to bolster the Reaching Across the Digital Divide (SURADD) project. Using VR technology, residents will be immersed in hands-on, inquiry-based teaching and learning experiences. Funds will be used to develop virtual reality (VR)-infused curricula; train teacher candidates and clinical educators in the use of the VR environment and incorporate the curricula in the classroom.[85]

Southern University Law Center (Baton Rouge, Louisiana): $ 3,029,484.79

The Southern University Law Center was established in 1947 after a Black student brought a lawsuit against the state of Louisiana because they wanted to be able to receive a law degree from a state institution.[86] The Southern University Law Center plans to implement their "Creating Digital Leaders" project using the designated funds. The initiative will revitalize school broadband infrastructure, help build information technology and digital literacy skills among the greater community; incorporate tele-law practices into their legal clinic programs; and provide subsidized broadband access and technology equipment to the community.[87]

Southern University (New Orleans, Louisiana): $ 3,000,000

The Southern University at New Orleans opened in 1959 as a branch of Baton Rouge's Southern University. It is a part of the only HBCU system worldwide.[88] Through their

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[82] Simmons College of Kentucky, *Our History, https://simmonscollegeky.edu/discover/history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[83] Press Release, The State of Kentucky, Gov. Beshear Provides Team Kentucky Update, (Feb. 2, 2023), https://www.kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=GovernorBeshear&prId=1659

[84] Southern University, *Southern University History, https://www.subr.edu/page/southern-university-history* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[85] James Wilkins, Southern University to Boost VR Teacher Training, Broadband Access, *Government Technology* (January 3, 2023) https://www.govtech.com/education/higher-ed/southern-university-to-boost-vr-teacher-training-broadband-access.

[86] Southern University Law Center, *A History of the Law Center, https://www.sulc.edu/page/about* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[87] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[88] Southern University at New Orleans, *SUNO Past, Present & Future, https://www.suno.edu/page/suno-past-present-future* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

"SUNOconnects" program, the University plans to provide training and greater broadband access to the campus and designated K-12 schools in the city's 9th and 15th Wards.[89]

St. Augustine's University (Raleigh, North Carolina): $ 1,943,715

St. Augustine's University was chartered in 1867, and it is notably the first HBCU to own on-campus commercial radio and television stations.[90] The University will use the funds to fuel their Broadband Upgrade and Digital Equity Initiative. The initiative will upgrade existing broadband infrastructure; create a digital navigator program where the digital navigators will help community members with Internet adoption and using digital devices. Additionally, the University will establish a cybersecurity program in partnership with Cycurion.[91]

Stillman College (Tuscaloosa, Alabama): $ 2,774,257.37

Stillman College was founded in 1876 and it was recently named one of the "15 Most Wired Campuses" by the U.S. News and Reports.[92] The grant will fund the College's Fiber for the Future project. This three-part program will: upgrade the campus fiber network; purchase laptops; and hire faculty members.[93]

Talladega College (Talladega, Alabama): $ 2,969,122

Talladega is Alabama's first private historically-Black liberal arts college founded by formerly enslaved and freed men.[94] Funds will be used for the "Realizing Future Proof Technology to Create Connections between Talladega College's Students, Faculty and Surrounding Community in Rural Alabama" initiative, which will   upgrade campus broadband to extend into the city of Talladega and portions of Talladega County; conduct a technology assessment; expand technology faculty and administrators; and facilitate virtual learning systems.[95]

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[89] Zach Labbé, SUNO announces $3M grant to improve internet access, *WGNO* (March 21, 2023) https://wgno.com/news/local/suno-announces-3m-grant-to-improve-internet-access/.

[90] Saint Augustine's University, *History, https://www.st-aug.edu/history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[91] Press Release, Saint Augustine's University, Department of Commerce Awards SAU $1.9M for Broadband Upgrade and Digital Equity Initiative, (Feb. 1, 2023), https://www.st-aug.edu/department-of-commerce-awards-sau-1-9m-for-broadband-upgrade-and-digital-equity-initiative/
[92] Stillman College, *Welcome to Stillman College, https://stillman.edu/about-us/legacy/stillman-at-a-glance/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[93] Press Release, Stillman College, Federal grant to power fiber, wireless upgrades on Stillman campus, (Feb. 27, 2023), https://stillman.edu/2023/02/federal-grant-to-power-fiber-wireless-upgrades-on-stillman-campus/
[94] Talladega College, *Our History, https://www.talladega.edu/our-history/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[95] Press Release, Talladega College, Talladega College awarded over $2.9 million to establish broadband network, (Feb. 28, 2023), https://www.talladega.edu/featured-news/talladega-college-awarded-over-29-million-to-establish-broadband-network/

Texas College (Tyler, Texas): $ 2,152,778.26

Founded by a group of Christian Methodist Episcopal ministers, Texas College celebrates 130 years of existence in 2024.[96] The University intends to use the funds to upgrade its current Internet bandwidth; partner with the current five residential Fixed Wireless providers to offer broadband education, awareness, training, and access to educate households in the local Tyler area and Smith County; IT faculty and staff will train student workers and students to provide training on how broadband services can improve small-business management within the community.[97]

Tuskegee University (Tuskegee, Alabama): $ 3,569,618

Founded by Dr. Booker T. Washington in 1881, Tuskegee is home the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine, which has graduated 75% of the nation's Black veterinarians.[98] The received funds will be used to bolster the "ConnecTUvity: Anchoring the Future of Tuskegee with Broadband Technology" program. Through this initiative the University will complete the installation of 21.17 miles of new fiber optic cables connecting 78 buildings on campus; install more than 1,200 wireless access points throughout the campus.[99]

University of Maryland Eastern Shore (Princess Anne, Maryland): $ 2,999,999.89

Since its founding in 1886, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore campus has grown from 16 acres to an 1,100-acre campus, offering 38 degrees and 16 graduate programs.[100] Funds will be used for the "Rebuilding Our Digital Road: Digital Infrastructure Re-imagining" project: expand broadband access; increase the access points for students and community members; and assess broadband capacity and digital infrastructure.[101]

University of the Virgin Islands (Charlotte Amalie, U.S. Virgin Islands): $ 2,990,822.86

The University of the Virgin Islands was founded in 1962 and currently offers 99 undergraduate and graduate degree programs.[102] NTIA funds will help will help pay for

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[96] Texas College, *History of Texas College, https://www.texascollege.edu/about-brtexas-college/history//* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[97] Press Release, Texas College, Texas College Closes the Gap Through Access to Technology, (Sep. 28, 2023), https://www.texascollege.edu/blog/post/texas-college-closes-the-gap-through-access-to-technology

[98] Tuskegee University, *History of Tuskegee University, https://www.tuskegee.edu/about-us/history-and-mission* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[99] Press Release, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee awarded more than $3.5 million for technology, connectivity upgrades, (Mar. 2, 2023), https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/tuskegee-awarded-more-than-35-million-for-technology-connectivity-upgrades

[100] University of Maryland at Eastern Shore, *History of UMES, https://wwwcp.umes.edu/about/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

[101] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[102] University of the Virgin Islands, *About UVI, https://www.uvi.edu/about/index.html* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).

their "UVI Technology Innovations: Expanding Network Capacity and Resilience to Foster Creativity, Enhance Cybersecurity, and Improve Access To Resources For Learning" project.[103] The project goals include: replacing fiber optic cables and routers; commissioning architectural drawings of residential facilities for optimizing Wi-Fi access points placement; creating a pilot community cloud.[104]

Wilberforce University (Wilberforce, Ohio): $ 2,066,822.86

Wilberforce University was founded during American chattel slavery in 1856 and is lauded as the "oldest private historically Black university owned and operated by African Americans."[105] In 1863 Daniel A. Payne became the University's president and was the first Black person to serve as president of an American institution of higher learning.[106] The institution will use the funds to revitalize Wi-Fi connectivity on campus; upgrade devices for student and faculty use; fund new information technology roles to aid with the infrastructure upgrades and implementation; and open the campus library to community members for technology use.[107]

Virginia State University (Petersburg, Virginia): $ 2,799,180

Virginia State University is the nation's first HBCU to offer both a college and a normal program, providing a broad range of academic opportunity for students.[108] The school's "Broadband Infrastructure and Digital Inclusion" initiative will: acquire and install fiber optic cabling, access points, and antenna systems across campus; distribute laptops to freshmen and join the MidAtlantic Research Infrastructure Alliance (MARIA); launch the Digital Navigator program in the anchor community; and implement a community coding initiative for K-12 students in the Ettrick and Petersburg communities.[109]

[103] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

[104] Press Release, The University of the Virgin Islands, Nearly $3 Million Grant Awarded to UVI to Expand High-Speed Internet Access, (Feb. 28, 2023), https://www.uvi.edu/news/2023/uvi-high-speed-internet-grant-awarded.html

[105] Wilberforce University, *About Wilberforce University, https://wilberforce.edu/about-wilberforce/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[106] Wilberforce University, *About Wilberforce University, https://wilberforce.edu/about-wilberforce/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[107] Press Release, Senator Sherrod Brown, Brown Announces More Than $2 Million for Broadband Access at Wilberforce University, (Mar. 7, 2023), https://www.brown.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/sherrod-brown-announces-2-million-broadband-access-wilberforce-university

[108] Virginia State University, *About Us, https://www.vsu.edu/about/* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[109] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61

Virginia Union University (Richmond, Virginia): $ 2,987,765

Founded in the wake of the American Civil War, Virginia Union University was the first HBCU with an academic library, which was constructed in 1865, the same year as its founding.[110] With funds VUU hopes to upgrade hardware and software; hire additional IT staff; provide complimentary broadband access and loaned equipment for students and residents; and offer digital skills development.[111]

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[110] Virginia Union University, *Our History & Our Purposehttps://www.vuu.edu/about-union/about/our-history-our-purpose* (last visited Mar. 3, 2024).
[111] Press Release, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than $175 Million in Internet for All Grants to 61 Minority-Serving Colleges and Universities, (Feb. 23, 2022), https://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov/news/latest-news/biden-harris-administration-announces-more-175-million-internet-all-grants-61