

BLACK ENTERPRISE Announces the Top 50 Colleges for African Americans

In September's BLACK ENTERPRISE (on newsstands Tues., Sept 29), "The Top 50 Colleges for African Americans". (PRNewsFoto/BLACK ENTERPRISE)

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NEW YORK, Aug. 28 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/-- BLACK ENTERPRISE (BE) today announced its 2006 list of the Top 50 Colleges for African Americans. Of the 10 highest-ranking schools for 2006, five are historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs); five are located in the South; and eight are private institutions.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20060828/NYM131LOGO>)

Attaining the No. 1 rank is Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, FL. Founded on October 3, 1887, as the State Normal College for Colored Students, the venerable HBCU offers 62 bachelor's degrees in 103 majors/tracks and provides 36 master's degrees in 56 majors/tracks. Florida A&M previously achieved the No. 6 rank in 2004. "FAMU's reputation for educational excellence continues to thrive," said Interim President Castell Vaughn Bryant. "We provide our students with well-rounded experiences and equip them with the skills they need to be successful and productive citizens. The impact of our students' success penetrates into an improved quality of life for the communities they go on to serve."

Closely following Florida A&M is No. 2 ranked Howard University in Washington, DC, which ranked No. 4. in 2004. Rounding out the top 10 are: No. 3, North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, NC; No. 4, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; No. 5, Spelman College, Atlanta, GA; No. 6, Hampton University, Hampton, VA.; No. 7, Stanford University, Stanford, CA; No. 8, Columbia University, New York, NY; No. 9, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA; and No. 10, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT.

To develop the 2006 list, BE surveyed more than 500 African American higher education professionals including presidents, chancellors, and directors of student affairs for their assessments of the social and academic environments for African American students at the nation's colleges and universities. The list was derived using the following variables: black student graduation rate; average survey score for the school's academic environment; average survey score for the school's social environment; total black undergraduate enrollment; black undergraduate students as a percentage of total undergraduates (credit for this variable was capped at 50% for HBCUs); and ranking on the 2004 BE Top Colleges list. The results were then narrowed to the published Top 50.

The variable given the heaviest weighting was black graduation rates, followed by the average academic and social environment scores. Due to added emphasis on these factors and other adjustments to the survey process itself, 17 schools that made this year's list didn't appear in 2004, including Mills College and Northwestern University. Morehouse, which had been the top school on the last two listings, slipped 44 spots, from No. 1 to No. 45, primarily because its graduation rate fell from 56% to 49% over the past two years. Several of the newcomers, such as Dickinson and Babson colleges, have graduation rates of 90% or higher, so schools with rates

below 50% were pushed further down or off the list completely. However, larger HBCUs like Florida A&M did well, even though they had graduation rates of less than 50%, because they benefited from having higher black enrollment numbers.

The BE 50 Top Colleges for African Americans report, which debuted in January 1999, was developed in collaboration with Thomas A. LaVeist, Ph.D., CEO of DayStar Research and professor at Johns Hopkins University. The complete list of the Top 50 Colleges for African Americans appears in the September BLACK ENTERPRISE, which hits newsstands on August 29.

For more information about Florida A&M contact Lanedra Carroll at 850-599-3413 or lanedra.carroll@famuedu.

BLACK ENTERPRISE, your ultimate guide to financial empowerment, is the premier business, investing, and wealth-building resource for African Americans. Since 1970, BE has provided essential business information and advice to professionals, corporate executives, entrepreneurs, and decision makers. Every month, BLACK ENTERPRISE magazine provides 3.9 million readers with information on entrepreneurship, careers, and financial management. A multimedia company, BE also produces radio and television programming, business and lifestyle events, Web content, and digital media. BLACK ENTERPRISE is the definitive source of information for and about African American business markets and leaders, and the authority on black business news and trends.

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