

---

# WASHINGTON TUSKEGEE ALUMNI CLUB NEWSLETTER

April 2020

Volume 1 Issue 3

## The Rebirth of the Washington Tuskegee Alumni Club's Newsletter

### Highlights Inside this Issue

**Active Members List**

Page 12

**Member(s) Spotlight**

Page 12

**Student(s) Spotlight**

Page 12

### News and Events

**Tuskegee University**

Page 2

**Around the Northeastern Region**

Page 3

**Washington Tuskegee Alumni Club**

Page 6

**College Recruitment Activities,  
Information, and Schedules**

Page 12



### Come one come all and read the rebirth of the WTAC newsletter

The goal is to have a quarterly newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to help engage, highlight news, and provide information to Tuskegee University Alumni, Family, and Friends that they may find important. We hope to highlight, but not be limited to the following: current events in the area and at Tuskegee University, highlight members, business partners, and Tuskegee University Students from our area. With your help, we can make this newsletter great. If you have any news or think of any information beneficial to the Washington Tuskegee Alumni Club's membership and supporters, please email the information to [newsletter@tuskeeedmv.org](mailto:newsletter@tuskeeedmv.org).

---

# Tuskegee University News

## **Tuskegee & NIH researchers develop potential way to reprogram immune cells to fight cancer, other diseases**



A team of Tuskegee University faculty scientists and doctoral students in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health has conducted immune therapy research that shows a strong potential promise in the future ability to reprogram immune cells, kill cancer cells and halt tumor growth in several types of cancer. This research is documented in detail in the article, "Mannose receptor (CD206) activation in tumor-associated macrophages enhances adaptive and innate antitumor immune responses," which is featured in the February 12, 2020 edition of the Science Translational Medicine weekly journal publication.

The article details how the newly developed therapeutic approach in fighting cancer relies on small proteins called host defense peptides. These are parts of the human immune system's defenses used by organisms to fend off bacteria, viruses, and other foreign invaders of the body. Using an algorithm that detects structural similarities, researchers have discovered that small stretches of amino acids in some of these peptides remained unchanged, or minimally changed, across organisms over millions of years of evolution.

The Tuskegee team is led by Clayton Yates, Ph.D., director of the Center for Cancer Research, and Jesse M. Jaynes, Ph.D. of the College of Agriculture, Environment and Nutrition Sciences. The team also consists of researchers from the NIH's National Cancer Institute (NCI) and National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS).

For more information on this amazing research:

---

<https://www.tuskegee.edu/news/tuskegee-nih-researchers-develop-potential-method-of-reprogramming-immune-cells-to-fight-cancer-other-diseases>

## TNAA News

### 19<sup>th</sup> Biennial TNAA Convention

The Tuskegee National Alumni Association (TNAA) 19th Biennial Convention is scheduled to be held August 6-9, 2020 at the Embassy Suites Hotel and Conference Center in Montgomery, Alabama. TNAA national officers for the 2020-2022 term will be elected at this convention. For more information, visit [www.tuskegeena.org](http://www.tuskegeena.org).

## Around the Northeastern Region

### The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Carver-Washington Scholarship Awards Breakfast



The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Carver-Washington Scholarship Awards Breakfast presented by the Baltimore Tuskegee Alumni Club was held on Saturday, February 15, 2020 at the Forum in Baltimore, Maryland.

---

## North Jersey Tuskegee Alumni Club Scholarship Brunch

The Annual North Jersey Tuskegee Alumni Club Scholarship Brunch will take place on Saturday, October 10, 2020 from 11:00am until 3:00pm at The Westwood, 438 North Avenue, Garwood, NJ. For more information about the brunch and to inquire about purchasing tickets please contact Jeff Bowen at [jeffboy145@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffboy145@yahoo.com).

# HBCU NEWS

## A Guide to HBCUs

U.S. News and World Report recently published an article on historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), their importance to higher education, and how they typically offer lower tuition costs and serve many under-resourced students.

Since their inception, HBCUs have served a student population that other institutions overwhelmingly refused. "It really was a response to the time of the mid-1800s, to the latter 1800s, where African Americans took their educational aspirations in their own hands, which developed the historically black colleges and universities," explains Joseph Montgomery, vice president for enrollment management and student success at Tuskegee University.

Michael Lomax of the United Negro College Fund wrote in 2015 that HBCUs are more important than ever. Lomax explained this viewpoint with six points: the lower average tuition cost of HBCUs; their success in meeting the needs of low-income and first-generation students; the potential to lower wealth disparity along racial lines; a supportive campus climate; the HBCU track record for postgraduate employment; and how the values of these institutions align with those of their students.

By the numbers, UNCF research suggests that HBCUs have an outsized effect on the education of black students. Despite these successes, challenges remain for HBCUs. Challenges include declining enrollment, maintenance and needed infrastructure improvements, and lower endowments compared to primarily white institutions. But proponents of HBCUs see signs of optimism. Signs include recent increases in federal

---

funding, rich cultures on HBCU campuses, and increased opportunities for internships and job placement after graduation for students.

Students interested in attending a HBCU should look at their academic programs, visit campuses, and meet with the faculty at prospective schools. They should also consider what support systems are in place, the faculty-to-student ratio and extracurricular activities.

For more information visit:

<https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/a-guide-to-hbcus>

## **Enrollment Declines Threaten Future of HBCUs, Disheartening Alumni**

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) conducted a study on the topic of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The study stated that more than 6,000 fewer students attended the 101 black colleges and universities in the U.S. during the 2018-19 school year. The 291,767 total was down from the 298,134 in the previous year, and was the lowest total since 2001, when there were 289,985 students at historically black colleges.

The NCES study does not explain the drop in HBCU enrollment, but there are indications as to the reasons behind the drop in enrollment. HBCUs lost \$50 million when the Department of Education made it more difficult to acquire the PLUS Loan that many schools relied on. HBCU retention rates are lower than predominantly white institutions. The rising popularity of online for profit colleges and universities has affected the enrollment of HBCUs. The lack of modern technology and building maintenance at HBCUs has caused many potential HBCU students to not attend HBCUs.

To fix these issues many thought leaders have some suggestions. The main suggestion is for presidents of HBCUs to have more of a business person mentality in which they understand that their college or university is a business and work hard to align themselves with major business organizations.

---

To read more about this story visit

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/enrollment-declines-threaten-future-hbcus-disheartening-alumni-n1158191>

# WTAC News

## HBCU Night with the Washington Wizards

The annual HBCU Night with the Washington Wizards was held on Friday, February 21, 2020 at the Capital One Arena in Washington, DC when the Wizards hosted the Cleveland Cavaliers. Many area Tuskegee alumni came out to enjoy the game and fellowship with fellow Tuskegee alumni as well as alumni from other HBCUs.



## WTAC 80th Anniversary Celebration

In October 2019 the Washington Tuskegee Alumni Club (WTAC) turned eighty years old. To celebrate this milestone occasion, WTAC will be hosting an 80th Anniversary Celebration event. The celebration event will be a speakeasy theme. The momentous event is scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2020. As of this newsletter's publication, the



---

event will continue as scheduled. But with the constant evolving changes to daily activities relating to the pandemic, things are subject to change. For the most up to date information about this event or club's response to the pandemic visit the club's website at [www.tuskegeedmv.org](http://www.tuskegeedmv.org) and continue to monitor your email for the latest correspondences.

## POSTPONED: 8<sup>th</sup> Annual HBCU 5K Run/Walk



The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual HBCU 5K Run/Walk and Community Day presented by Xfinity that was scheduled to be on Saturday, July 11, 2020 at Freedom Plaza in Downtown Washington, DC has been postponed until 2021. The new date will be Saturday, July 10, 2021. This event is organized by the Washington, DC Metro HBCU Alumni Alliance (DCHBCUAA). The DCHBCUAA is a non-profit community-based organization that collaborates mainly to strengthen the

community through our impactful programs and to provide support to underserved students interested in attending HBCUs. WTAC is a proud member of the Alliance. This will be the first year that this event will be held on the National Mall after being held on the campus of Howard University for the past seven years. For more information about the Run/Walk, visit the Alliance's website at [www.dchbcu.org](http://www.dchbcu.org). Or for assistance in registering or if you have additional questions about WTAC's involvement with the DCHBCUAA please email [wtac@tuskegeedmv.org](mailto:wtac@tuskegeedmv.org).

## Inquire, Response, Faith, and Follow Through

**“How a Potential TU student and family INQUIRY, Washington Tuskegee Alumni Club (WTAC) RESPONSE, FAITH, and FOLLOW THROUGH = an OPPORTUNITY to see a DREAM become a REALITY”**

---

By Alfred Harrison

**Inquiry:**

The WTAC received an email about a local high school senior, who wanted to major in cyber security and aerospace, by attending Tuskegee University. The student applied to Tuskegee in the fall 2019 but had not heard any reply and was wondering what they could do.

**Response:**

The club jumped on the inquiry and current president, Marcus Cooper, took the lead. Mr. Cooper, not only responded to the email as an acknowledgement that it was received, but acted by reaching out to Mr. Melvin Ross—the WTAC’s Chairperson of college recruitment—to see what they could do. Mr. Ross indicated that this week, Tuskegee University admissions recruiter would be present at the Alfred Street Baptist Church college fair on January 25, 2020 and encouraged them to attend. Mr. Cooper discovered that the student and his mom were attending but may not be able to get an onsite interview since all Tuskegee University slots were filled. Mr. Cooper in turn informed the family that the WTAC would have a recruitment team there that may be able to help and the team will be on the lookout for the student.

By the time the student arrived, every member of the WTAC college fair recruitment team was on the alert and eager to see what they could do. Finally, the student appeared with his mom and confirmed that all the interview slots were filled. For many, people tend to lose faith and get discouraged because of what is currently in front of them. Fortunately, we went to Tuskegee University, which taught us that obstacles are just an opportunity to show that our faith in God is stronger than the obstacle presented.

**Faith:**

One of the Alumnus from the recruitment team advised them to try again around a certain time and see if the recruiter can squeeze them in. Now it was the student’s turn to practice some of the lessons they will learn at Tuskegee University, which is being persistent, having faith, never giving up, embracing challenges, and if there is a will, there is a way. The family agreed and waited as recommended. Fifteen (15) minutes after the college fair closed, the TU college recruiter, Marissa Anderson, due to so many students interviewed, finally was able to meet the WTAC recruitment team to gather data and debrief.

**Follow Through:**

The team inquired if she had met with the local high school student. Marissa could not confirm yea or nay, but both an alumnus of the WTAC recruiting team and her, agreed to go double check upstairs.



---

While they were walking back upstairs, behold, the student and his mom were waiting as instructed. The alumnus introduced the local high school student to Marissa and she interviewed them instantly.

Guess What?

He got in! He was accepted right on the spot. The student and mom could not believe it, revealed by the shocking expression, mixed with excitement and a Flavor Flav “WOW” on their faces! Marissa and the fellow alumnus were overjoyed from their reaction! They later found out from the mom that this experience was nerve wrecking and really challenging the student to be persistent in order to get an answer from the school that was their first choice. The student could not stop saying, “thank you!” They even wrote the club expressing their joy and gratitude as well.

Amazing how the WTAC’s RESPONSE, FAITH, and FOLLOW THROUGH from an email led to a family’s dream becoming a reality.

## What an Experience!

By Alfred Harrison



Tuskegee University Admissions Counselor Marissa Anderson talking with students at the ASBC HBCU Festival

The Washington Tuskegee Alumni Club (WTAC) represented Tuskegee University by recruiting at the Alfred Street Baptist Church (ASBC) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Festival on January 25, 2020, and it was a blast. This is considered one of the biggest college fairs in the Washington Metropolitan area. Representing WTAC and Tuskegee University were Darryl Love, Evan Strother, Christine Davis, Rebecca Collins, Alfred Harrison and Tuskegee University Admission recruiter Marissa Anderson. According to Evan Strother, Class of 08’, “The ASBC HBCU festival is my favorite college fair to participate in.” The experience was like no other. Prior to the event, like every college fair attended by the WTAC, Mr. Melvin Ross, WTAC Chairperson of Tuskegee University Recruitment, made sure each alumni volunteer recruiter, regardless of experience or degree, was properly registered, well prepared, and understand that the main objective is to give factual information to attendees for them to make an informed decision on attending Tuskegee University. The ASBC WTAC recruitment team was ready for anything.



WTAC Alumni Alfred Harrison talking with prospective Tuskegee University students.

While the college fair's operating hours were from 9am to 3pm, Tuskegee University's recruiters were in high demand and stayed after closing time. We all agreed that we would give each attendee the opportunity, just like so many of us were given, to not only apply and/or inquire of Tuskegee University, but to experience that TU Love. Many students and parents not only felt that love but some, including random TU alumni stopped by, gave positive feedback about their relatives or someone they know who made a great choice to attend Tuskegee University. This really spoke volumes of the love many of us only can testify by attending Tuskegee University.

The TU admission recruiter Marissa Anderson enjoyed her experience at this event. From seeing so many students with good GPAs and SAT Scores to appreciation of having the local TU alumni here to help assist. This assistance and support allowed Marissa to give every student, regardless of the max reserved onsite interviews appointments that day, an opportunity to get an onsite interview. Commitment and effort exceeded our expectation as over 100 students applied to Tuskegee and over 80 students were accepted. That's over 80% of students who applied to TU, left the college fair smiling cheek to cheek with a sticker saying, "We got in Tuskegee University". Some students were so excited that after their interview, they came down to the general table to let the WTAC recruiting team know that they got in. Their joy, excitement of getting accepted, and realizing their dreams of attending Tuskegee University becoming a reality was so contagious that the WTAC recruiting team gave high fives, took pictures with them, encouraged them to finish strong, continue to apply for scholarships, and that the WTAC is here for any support.

As we were able to debrief over a meal, we each left with a feeling of honor and eagerness to represent Tuskegee University again which is the normal feeling at all college fairs the WTAC attends. Although this was a great recruiting day, Marissa brought to our mind that for many, this was only the first step. The second step is financing a college education. As many of us are aware, of all of the applicants in this area who were accepted to Tuskegee last year, about 12% became financial TU freshmen. This is a challenge yet an opportunity for others such as us, alumni, to find ways to give back time, money, and/or other resources. The WTAC has offered annually Washington DC area students scholarships and other resources. WE AIM TO DO EVEN MORE but it requires commitment and help from All ALUMNI as well. The demand is

---

there, the challenge is there, The Washington Tuskegee Alumni club is there, the opportunity to make a difference is there, all we need is you to be there as well and we, together can do it. If you like to volunteer for any of our next college fairs or would like to help in other ways, please email us including your name, class year, contact information, major, and interest at [wtac@tuskegeedmv.org](mailto:wtac@tuskegeedmv.org). Also, to make a donation, become a member, and find out about WTAC events, you can check out the club website at [www.tuskegeedmv.org](http://www.tuskegeedmv.org).

## **Additional Upcoming Club Events**

Annual Club Cookout: Tentative date - July 25, 2020

Annual Dr. Luther H. Foster Scholarship Breakfast - October 3, 2020

More information about the above events to follow via the club's website at [www.tuskegeedmv.org](http://www.tuskegeedmv.org) and through email correspondences.

## **Upcoming Club Meetings**

General club meetings are currently scheduled on the second Sunday of each month. No meetings are scheduled for the months of July and August. Meeting dates and times are subject to change due to holidays and meeting space availability. Meeting information can be found on our website at <https://www.tuskegeedmv.org>. All meetings are currently planned to be at Petworth Neighborhood Library, 4200 Kansas Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20011, 3pm-5pm unless otherwise noted. The dates for the next few months are listed below:

Sunday, April 19, 2020 (virtual meeting)

Sunday, May 17, 2020

Sunday, June 14, 2020

## **College Recruitment Activities, Information, and Schedules**

---

All recruitment activities are cancelled for the remainder of the academic calendar year. Thank you to the alumni that volunteered to assist with recruitment events, and we look forward to helping with recruitment during the 2020-2021 academic year.

To find out more recruitment information or volunteer: contact Melvin Ross at [melvin.ross@tuskegeedmv.org](mailto:melvin.ross@tuskegeedmv.org)

## Member Spotlight

There are members doing great things for our university and in our community, please take the time to tell us about it so we can share, contact us at [newsletter@tuskegeedmv.org](mailto:newsletter@tuskegeedmv.org).

## Student Spotlight

If you have a Tuskegee Student you think we should know about, please contact us at [newsletter@tuskegeedmv.org](mailto:newsletter@tuskegeedmv.org).

## Current Active Financial Members As of March 31, 2020

B. A. Akinlosotu	Anthony Delaney	Alfred Harrison	Jordan Pollard	Julius Washington
Darlene Baker	Craig Dexter	Latoya Haynes	Gayle Rankine	Tamara Washington
Saul Beacher	Tovah Dorsey-Pollard	Victor Hinton	David Reid	Angela Watson
William Bell	Agnes Fields	Theodore Hinton	Sandra Richardson	Joyce Watson
Marie Blake	Samuel Fields	Karina Jones	Chris Richardson	William Watson
Ronald Blakely	Lawrence Gary	Joyce Lipscomb	Betty Ros	Robert Western
Katie Blanding	Lenox Gay	Sherman McKenney	Melvin Ross	Monique White
Curtestine Boardley	Justin Germany	Janelle Miller	Anthony Smith	Aretha Williams
Adrienne Cooper	Christopher Greene	Thelma Monk	Gloria Stewart	Gwendolyn Williams
Marcus Cooper	Harriet Hamlin	Mishari Murry-Hanible	Evan Strother	
Christine Davis	Jennifer Hampton	Gregory Nixon	Tomeka Terry	
Edward Dawson	William Hampton	Willie Oxendine	Margaret Tolbert	

## Membership Goal (100 Members)



## Membership By Month

