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## Original Article

# Philanthropy and the curriculum: The role of philanthropy in the development of curriculum at Spelman College

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### Yarbrah T. Peebles

is a doctoral student in the Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia, Athens, GA, USA. She is also the 2010–2011 Zell and Shirley Miller Fellow. Her research interests include policy, strategy and management issues related to HBCUs and access and success issues related to first-generation, low-income and underrepresented students. Yarbrah earned an MS in Higher Education from Florida State University and a BS and MBA from Florida A&M University.

**ABSTRACT** Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have received inadequate funding since their inception. This has challenged the development of programs and infrastructure, the adoption of technology, and the recruitment of faculty and students. Yet among HBCUs there are standouts that, despite unequal funding patterns in comparison to predominately White institutions (PWI), have developed curriculums that propelled their institutions to greatness. Spelman College, a historically Black women's college (HBWC), is one of the nation's premier historically Black liberal arts institutions, and its prestigious and enduring legacy has been greatly influenced by both its curriculum and its financial resources. Using the Spelman College presidential administrations as an organizational framework, this article seeks to highlight the role of philanthropy in the evolution of the Spelman College curriculum and provide recommendations to other HBCUs based upon the actions of Spelman College presidents.

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### INTRODUCTION

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), since their

inception, have been underfunded (Kujovich, 1994). This lack of funding has hindered and challenged the development of programs, the adoption of technology, the attraction of faculty and the recruitment of the best and brightest students. Yet,

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**Correspondence:** Yarbrah T. Peebles  
Institute of Higher Education, University of Georgia,  
Athens, GA 30602, USA

among HBCUs there are standouts that, despite unequal funding patterns in comparison to predominately White institutions (PWI), have developed curriculums that propelled their institutions to greatness. Spelman College, a historically Black women's college (HBWC), is one of these standout institutions, regarded as both a premier HBCU and liberal arts colleges (US News and World Report, 2010).

Stark and Lattuca's (1997) research on curriculum identified three areas of curricular influence: external, internal and organizational. External influences on curriculum development include: society, the government, the marketplace, academic associations, alumni and sponsors (1997). Philanthropic support by way of sponsors and alumni provides financial resources, which are critical to the operationalization of curriculum. Understanding more about the philanthropy and its influence are important especially for HBCUs. Research on philanthropy at HBCUs has been intermittent. Although scholars such as Marybeth Gasman (2002), Gasman and Anderson-Thompkins (2003), Natalie T.J. Tindall (2007, 2009) and others have examined this topic, there is still a shortage of literature in this area.

Spelman College's ability to secure philanthropic support, despite its miniscule financial beginnings, largely influenced its curriculum and its development into a leader among HBCUs. Using the Spelman College presidential administrations as a frame, this article will examine the evolution of Spelman College and its curriculum while highlighting the significant and influential role of philanthropy. This

article will conclude with several recommendations for HBCUs on both curriculum and philanthropy based on the actions of the presidents of Spelman College.

## DEFINING CURRICULUM

A discussion of the Spelman College curriculum cannot begin without first identifying a definition for curriculum. This article focuses on curriculum as defined by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1997) which asserts curriculum in its formal academic mode is 'the body of courses that present the knowledge, principles, values, and skills, that are the intended consequences of the formal education offered by the college' (pg. xi). Though the purpose of this article is primarily to explore the role of philanthropy in the evolution of the Spelman College curriculum, this discussion must begin by reviewing the other contextual influences that shaped not only the founding of Spelman College but also the curricular direction of the institution.

## BLACK EDUCATION IN THE 1800s

From the very beginning the purpose of higher education from the perspective of blacks was centered on the philosophy of racial uplift (Faragher and Howe, 1988). This philosophy was one that emphasized the value and benefit of education for blacks as a whole rather than the individual, an idea that completely contradicted whites' view of education. Racial uplift involved educating blacks so they could in turn educate future generations, and ultimately uplift the entire race. Although blacks hoped to elevate the race, many whites saw



'negro education' as an opportunity to civilize the 'intellectually and morally inferior' blacks (p. 66).

This was not the only contradiction between white and black higher education; the two perspectives also differed on the education of women. White women were highly discouraged from obtaining higher education and instead were relegated to traditional female roles. Those that did pursue college received an education in striking contrast to the education received by white men. Even after completing their education there were still few opportunities available to white women. However, blacks, ever committed to the concept of racial uplift, encouraged the education of black women (Faragher and Howe, 1988). If the elevation of the race was to ever be achieved, blacks knew it would be done with the help of men and women; it was an economic necessity. The greatest challenge was where and how blacks would be educated. The atmosphere in America in the mid 1800s, particularly in the South, was hostile. Though some northern institutions allowed Black men and women to enroll in college, in the South, the home of the majority of freed and enslaved blacks, this was unheard of until after the Civil War.

Cheney University, the first Black college, began in 1837, over 25 years before the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. By 1890 there were nearly 200 higher-education institutions established for blacks (Brown and Davis, 2001). They were established to provide education to freed slaves and though they were commonly referred to as 'colleges', 'universities' and 'institutes' most provided education at the primary or secondary level

(Gasman *et al*, 2008). These schools provided an education that focused on basic skills, as many of the entering students could not even read. It was not until the early 1900s that many of these institutions began to offer a collegiate curriculum.

The first HBWC, now known as Barbara Scotia College, was founded as a seminary in 1867 with the mission of educating the daughters of freed slaves. The primary mission of the institution was to train black women to become teachers and social workers and to develop a pool of black leaders (www.b-sc.edu, 2009). In total four HBWCs existed, but owing to financial challenges and social pressure two eventually embraced coeducation, as did many historically White women's colleges (HWWC) of the time (Smith *et al*, 1995). Today there are two HBWCs, Bennett College for Women and Spelman College.

## PHILANTHROPY AND HBCUS

The beginning of black higher education was overwhelmingly defined by private colleges and supported by philanthropists and philanthropic organizations that solely determined the direction and often the survival of the institutions (Anderson, 1988). Philanthropic interest in black higher education was influenced by an amalgamation of desires. Some philanthropists believed education would be the vehicle to convert freed slaves to Christianity and influence their values and behavior, others sought to provide slaves educational parity in order to help them survive and prosper economically, still others believed by controlling black higher

education they could also control the nation's industry (1988).

Three groups of philanthropists supporting black higher education emerged: black missionary philanthropists, northern white philanthropists and industrial philanthropists. Each of these groups invested in black education and each had a different goal for black education. Black missionary philanthropists believed in the concept of 'racial uplift' (Anderson, 1988; Gasman *et al*, 2010). Northern white philanthropists believed that education would provide blacks with educational parity in society and would allow them an opportunity to succeed. They also believed education would refine black students and teach them important things like social graces and manners (Anderson, 1988). Black missionaries and northern white missionaries agreed on the following two areas: Christianizing their students and creating a class of leaders (Gasman *et al*, 2010). Industrial philanthropists had very different ideas about black higher education. Their goal was to control black education to create a class of laborers who were skilled in vocational arts and to ensure blacks were relegated to lower level positions and did not threaten whites economically or politically (Anderson, 1988; Cross-Brazzell, 1992).

Black missionary philanthropists represented two major denominations: the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) churches and the Colored Methodist Episcopal churches. They founded institutions like Morris Brown College, Paine College and Allen College. Northern white philanthropists represented two major groups: The America Methodist

Association and the American Baptist Home Missionary Society (ABHMS). They founded institutions like Spelman College, Morehouse College, Fisk University and Dillard University. Industrial philanthropists included wealthy individuals and foundations including the General Education Board, the Slater Fund, Andrew Carnegie, James Baldwin and John D Rockefeller Sr & Jr (Anderson, 1988).

## PHILANTHROPY AND SPELMAN COLLEGE

The evolution and growth of HBCUs occurred during a period of harsh racial segregation. Though there were some commonalities between the development of HBCUs and PWIs, and specifically HBWCs and HWWCs, the differences were vast and almost completely connected to the presence or lack of financial support (Brown and Davis, 2001).

Spelman College is a private, liberal arts and HBWC. It is also arguably one of the best HBCUs and liberal arts institutions in the country, consistently ranked among the nation's top 100 liberal arts colleges and listed as the top HBCU (US News and World Report, 2010). The institution's success in comparison to other HBCUs, liberal arts institutions and women's colleges can be attributed to many things, but it must mainly be credited to its ability to attract strong philanthropic support, even from its early beginnings (Williams and Ashley, 2004). Spelman used this support to develop and grow the institution as a whole, but specifically to advance its curriculum, evolving from a focus on teacher and missionary education to a robust liberal arts education.



### 1881–1909: THE BEGINNING: THE SOPHIA B. PACKARD AND HARRIET E. GILES ADMINISTRATION

The importance of philanthropy was evident from the very beginning of Spelman College. In 1881, armed with a \$100 gift from a northern Baptist church and promises of additional financial support from the Woman's ABHMS (WABHMS), Sophia B. Packard and Harriet E. Giles opened the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary with Packard serving as president (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981; Lefever, 2005a,b). WABHMS was an arm of the ABHMS, one of the most prominent northern mission societies, known for its role in supporting the leading black institutions during that time (Anderson, 1988). Along with financial support, these groups generally encouraged the teaching of classical liberal arts because they saw it as a way to 'achieve racial equality in civil and political life' (Anderson, 1988, p. 240).

Packard and Giles, however, did not emphasize classical education; they declared the primary mission of the college was the religious and moral education of black women. They believed these women should be trained as teachers, missionaries and church workers (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981). They also saw a place for industrial training in the curriculum; but, while the school's charter was filed in 1888 requesting that a school be established for black women where 'special attention [was] to be given to the formation of industrial habits' Packard and Giles believed industrial education should be secondary to the education of teachers, preachers and future leaders of the

race (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981, p. 29). This was reflective in their first graduates who were either teachers or missionaries (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006).

To achieve this goal the school started with two departments, the normal department and the academic department (Lefever, 2005a,b). The normal department provided students with basic skill courses in reading, math, writing, spelling and history, skills that most blacks entering higher education lacked during this period of history. However, the academic department also included course offerings in courses like Latin, rhetoric, botany, moral philosophy, zoology and geology (Read, 1961; Cross-Brazzell, 1992; Lefever, 2005b). There was also a course on the evidence of Christianity, a direct tie to the religious affiliation of the funders and the founders of the institution.

The early 1880s saw a tremendous increase in financial support from industrial philanthropists. These individuals and groups had a lot of money and began directing it towards HBCUs, largely because they saw the education of the Negro as a direct threat to white wealth and power in the country (Anderson, 1988; Cross-Brazzell, 1992). By directing funds to HBCUs to establish a more industrial focused curriculum the industrial philanthropist felt they could maintain their control. Though Packard and Giles had a different vision for their institution they, like many other black institutions, could not resist the money industrial philanthropist were gifting. A few years after establishing their first two departments they added a third, the industrial department. This department was funded by a grant

from the John F. Slater Fund in 1885 and offered courses in printing, sewing, dressmaking, cooking, laundry work and other domestic arts (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981; Lefever, 2005a, b).

The dedication of the founders spread to the black community and numerous families began to send their daughters to the school. The enrollment grew so rapidly they quickly outgrew their basement facilities and desperately needed a new location. Once they were able to locate a 9-acre parcel the ABHMS provided the school with the down payment needed for the \$17 500 purchase (Lefever, 2005b). In order to pay the remaining balance of the purchase along with other operating expenses, the founders began a fundraising effort. They were able to raise some money from local black Baptist churches and the surrounding black community, but one of the largest contributors to the fundraising campaign was John D. Rockefeller, a Baptist, industrial philanthropist, and one of the wealthiest men in the US (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981; Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006).

John D. Rockefeller's first gift to black education was to Spelman College in 1884 (Read, 1961). Rockefeller first learned of Spelman College at his church in Ohio in 1882 (Read 1961; Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981). He is storied to have emptied his pockets and pledged an additional \$250 with promises of additional support if Packard and Giles stuck to their mission of teaching and missionary education (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981). His family also supported the institution, particularly his wife Laura Spelman whose name

the college later adopted in 1924 (Lefever, 2005a). With the help of funds and support from the John D. Rockefeller the institution was able to expand and improve the campus. Rockefeller gave \$13 400 in 1890 to build laundry facilities, \$56 000 in 1893 to erect Guiles Hall, and \$200 000 in 1900 to build four new buildings, provide campus improvements and to install a heating and lighting system and a fence around the campus (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981).

By 1907 Spelman College was receiving \$12 000 annually from the General Education Board, \$5000 for the normal and industrial departments from the Slater Fund, and \$8000 from the WABHMS for teacher salaries (Read, 1961). Financial contributions from these industrial philanthropic organizations demonstrate the high levels of support given to HBCUs to enhance their industrial focus. Spelman's curriculum included industrial components, but also included the founders' enduring commitment to missionary education, and the traditional values of gender roles reflective of both the religious and societal beliefs of the time. They wanted their students to graduate and be able to manage their responsibilities in the workplace and in the home (Cross-Brazzell, 1992). Students during this time earned certificates in cooking and domestic arts, dressmaking, printing, nursing and laundry work, and diplomas in teaching, missionary work, high school academics and college preparation (Guy-Sheftall and Stewart, 1981).

Even at this early point in Spelman's history the founders employed several strategies for fundraising.



Dr J.H. Hanaford bequeathed \$1400 to Spelman in his will, black churches and schools donated money, current students raised funds to buy sewing machines and wall paper for their dormitories, and an Improvement Fund was set up to raise \$13000 to receive \$10000 from the General Education Board (GEB), as an early form of matching funds, and even the Spelman Alumnae Association, founded in 1892 and comprised of former students and teachers, gave financial gifts to the College (Read, 1961). The Packard and Giles era ended by 1909. Packard passed away in 1891 leaving Giles to assume the presidency until her death in 1909.

### **1910–1927: INCORPORATING INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION: THE LUCY H. TAPLEY ADMINISTRATION**

By the early 1900s black student enrollment in higher education continued to grow, though the growth of private Black higher-education institutions began to decline. Negro philanthropic organizations had already depleted their small funds and most of the missionary philanthropic organizations were going bankrupt (Anderson, 1988). Following the death of Harriet Giles, Lucy Upton served as acting president until Lucy Tapley, a former Spelman teacher and administrator, was appointed president of Spelman College in 1910. Tapley was known for her sternness, her acceptance of Jim Crow, and her ideas about the direction of Spelman. Tapley decided Spelman women needed more training in industrial education and decided to alter the curriculum to have a more vocational emphasis (Read, 1961; Miller-Bernal and Poulson,

2006). She sought out and secured additional funds from the Slater Foundation, a foundation that restricted fund usage to industrial curriculum.

The liberal education versus industrial education debate intensified during this time. W.E.B. Du Bois argued of the importance for blacks to receive liberal education through the use of his ‘talented tenth’ concept. This concept echoed the ‘racial uplift’ idea and referred to the education of 10 percent of the black population who would in turn educate the remaining 90 percent (Willie and Edmonds, 1978). Booker T. Washington argued in support of industrial education. Though he supported liberal education for black elites, Washington believed the majority of blacks would be better served with a useful education that would prepare them for a profession so they could provide for their families (Willie and Edmonds, 1978; Ricard and Brown, 2008).

Tapley’s administration was harshly criticized in later years, but it is unclear whether Tapley was fundamentally against the founding mission of Spelman or whether she thought she was acting in the best interest of the College. Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute stood out as examples of the influence of the industrial philanthropists. Both of these black colleges received major financial support from the Peabody Foundation and Slater Fund and by the 1920s their combined endowments totaled \$14 million whereas the endowments of the other 97 black colleges totaled a meager \$6 million (Anderson, 1988). During this time Spelman did not have an endowment.

By the early 1900s public HBCUs began to grow because of funds received from the Second Morrill Act of 1890, which provided land grants to start state sponsored institutions for blacks because they were denied admittance into white higher education institutions. Nearly half of black students were educated at public HBCUs (1988). Tapley's decision to shift the focus to industrial education may have also been because of her determination for institutional survival. Beyond her personal beliefs about the importance of an industrial curriculum she may have believed that an emphasis in industrial education was the best strategic decision for the future of Spelman College. Industrial philanthropic organizations supported her decision and she was able to secure \$85 000 from the General Education Board to erect two new facilities during her tenure, one for nursing training and another for home economics. However, following Tapley's retirement in 1927 changes in curriculum were immediate.

### **1927–1953: THE MAKING OF A LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE: THE FLORENCE M. READ ADMINISTRATION**

When Florence M. Read began her presidency her most pressing order of business was developing Spelman into a liberal arts college of high quality (Read, 1961). Within the first year, with the support of the Spelman's board of trustees she dissolved the elementary school and began to strengthen the curriculum by adding college-level courses in the classics, philosophy, music, psychology and literary criticism (Read, 1961; Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006). Another

major concern of Read's was an endowment. Read knew how important it was for Spelman to establish an endowment and she made her acceptance of the presidency of Spelman contingent upon the GEB promise to assist her in the building process (Watson and Gregory, 2005). The GEB, in turn, promised to establish a \$1.5 million endowment if Read was able to solicit matching funds. Read successfully raised the matching dollars through gifts from Julius Rosenwald and the Julius Rosenwald Fund, the WABHMS, and a \$1 million gift from Laura Spelman Rockefeller, and by 1935 Spelman had an endowment (Read, 1961).

When the Great Depression hit the nation it severely affected the levels of philanthropic support the institution received. It also affected curricular decision-making. With less external support, Read was forced to downsize departments, close the campus hospital and discontinue the high school (Read, 1961; Watson and Gregory, 2005). But, she was also able to use the challenging economy to develop cooperative teaching agreements with Morehouse and Atlanta University. These agreements expanded into the Atlanta University System, today called the Atlanta University Consortium, which created a strategic alliance among the participating institutions that strengthened each of the institutions academically. In addition, new courses were offered, a laboratory school was created and accreditation appeared to be in the near future (2005).

Accreditation became a major topic of importance for HBCUs in the late 1920s. In search of legitimacy HBCU leaders believed affiliation with an





accrediting body would attest to their ability to provide college level instruction. The process of accreditation was difficult for these institutions due to very rigid requirements. Schools had to have an endowment of \$200 000, library and laboratory facilities, and at least six departments or professorships (Anderson, 1988). The endowment criteria alone excluded nearly all of the black institutions.

Determined to achieve accreditation HBCUs worked hard to fulfill all of the criteria set out by the accrediting organizations. In June of 1930 the GEB assisted the Atlanta University System schools by providing \$350 000 to build a library for the schools to share (Watson and Gregory, 2005). In addition, there was a movement among the schools to increase faculty standards and faculty salaries to become in-line with accreditation standards. In December 1930 the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) granted seven HBCUs with accreditation including Spelman (Davis, 1933). In the same year Spelman was also elected to membership in the Association of American Colleges (Watson and Gregory, 2005). By 1932 SACS voted to give a 'Class A' rating, the highest rating awarded, to the bachelor of arts degrees conferred by Spelman (Read, 1961).

In the 1940's Spelman joined with a group of private HBCUs to form the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). This group formed in response to the dramatic decline in foundation support and the challenging economic landscape created by the Great Depression (Tucker, 2002). The UNCF was the first organization to utilize cooperative solicitation in fundraising

and also the first to seek operating funds from businesses and corporations (Read, 1961). The UNCF solicited funds on behalf of all of the institutions and then evenly divided the funds, minus operating dollars, amongst the member schools (Gasman, 2008). The UNCF was extremely successful in its early years and by the mid-1950s, when Manley took office, UNCF funds made up nearly 10 percent of the budgets of its 30 member institutions (Trent, 1955; Read, 1961). By 1953, when Read's presidency ended, Spelman received more than \$365 000 through their participation with UNCF (Read, 1961).

President Read's ability to fundraise, forge strategic relationships and step out into unknown territory was critical at this time in Spelman's history. However, despite all of the changes she made at Spelman, President Read remained committed to the idea of the cultured and well-behaved woman. She, like Tapley, believed women set the standards for society and if women were not trained in manners and character building, the entire society would decline (McCandless, 1999). Read, like many people in the South, believed in the idea of the 'southern belle'. At Spelman becoming a 'Spelman Girl' was considered a part of the educational outcomes. 'She' was expected to be quiet, gentle and ladylike and exhibit social poise and manners (1999). The 'Spelman Girl' idea continues to exist today at Spelman College and though manners and grace are still a part of the definition, over time it has, expanded to include other characteristics, namely leadership, a characteristic present in many Spelman women as the Civil Rights Movement was birthed in the South.

### **1953–1976: CIVIL RIGHTS: THE ALBERT E. MANLEY ADMINISTRATION**

In 1953 Albert E. Manley became the first black and the first male president of Spelman College after Florence Read retired. His presidency began at a very interesting period in national history; it was right before the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling ended segregation in public school and at the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement (Movement). HBCU students throughout the South played, ‘instrumental roles as leaders and foot soldiers in the Civil Rights Movement’ (Allen and Jewell, 2002, p. 284). Spelman College, located in Atlanta, was in the center of much of the Movement due to the presence of Martin Luther King Jr, a strong National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and large numbers of young, black college students dissatisfied with racial injustice.

Financially, Spelman was faring much better than most HBCUs at the time. The relationship between Spelman and the Rockefeller Foundations continued but Spelman also sought others means of financial support. In the late 1950’s Spelman received a generous gift from Charles E. Merrill, Jr, the son of the founder of Merrill Lynch Brokerage Firm. This gift provided scholarships for study abroad opportunities for Spelman students and laid the foundation for the study abroad program at the institution (Lefever, 2005a). Some students attributed the study abroad opportunity with influencing their quest in the South for equality.

Though only a small percentage of college students from the Atlanta

University System were involved in the Movement, their involvement had a direct impact on the campus. Spelman had remained, since its founding, a conservative and paternalistic environment. But, the Movement gave the students a reason to get active and engaged and to challenge authority (Lefever, 2005a). Spelman students joined organizations like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, participated in boycotts, picketing, and freedom rides and some even served jail time to demonstrate their opposition to segregation and discrimination (Lefever, 2005a).

In the late 1960’s when the Movement came to an end it left a student body at Spelman much more engaged in their learning. The students began to question their curriculum, desiring it to be more reflective of the changing world they lived in and more ‘relevant to black people’ (p. 241). The students demanded an updated curriculum, a black studies program, and review of the very strict Spelman rules. They also wanted campus media to better reflect the students’ love of black culture and pride (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006). The students also pushed each other to be more socially conscious, involved and more independent. A new Spelman emerged. The school became more independent from Morehouse, a Non-Western Studies program sponsored by the Ford Foundation was founded in the Atlanta University Center in 1961, and by 1969 a Black studies program was officially incorporated into Spelman’s curriculum (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006; spelman.edu, 2010). In addition, the yearbook and other



campus media reflected a more politically, socially and culturally connected student body.

The social and cultural movements occurring in the nation largely overshadowed the Manley administration. His legacy is most remembered by the cultural shifts occurring on the campus and within the students during his administration, which ended quietly with his retirement in 1976.

### **1976–1986: QUIET IMPROVEMENT: THE DONALD STEWART ADMINISTRATION**

The Stewart administration is remembered as a period of quiet academic improvement because it was sandwiched between the administrations of President Manley and President Cole. Though there was some controversy in the initial selection of Stewart as the person to follow Manley, because many students and alumni felt it was time for a female president, his presidency was rather smooth. His tenure brought two major gifts, which in turn resulted in two important enhancements to Spelman's curriculum.

In 1981 the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation provided a grant to establish the Women's Research and Resource Center (WRRC), the first HBCU women's center in the nation. The WRRC brought the ideals of the feminist movement to campus, where it had previously had little impact (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006). The goals of the WRRC included 'curricular development in women's studies, research on black women, and community outreach to women' (pg. 246). The WRRC housed the first

women studies minor at an HBCU and received a great deal of attention from other funding organizations. The Ford Foundation provided a grant for the development of a Black women's studies curriculum in 1983, the Southern Education Foundation provided a grant for the development of a literary journal in 1986, and the Charles Mott Foundation even provided a grant to endow a chair in women's studies (spelman.edu, 2010). Before his retirement Stewart secured a grant from NASA to establish the Women in Science and Engineering Scholars Program. This program was important to Stewart because he was interested in building the science program at Spelman. NASA saw the partnership as an opportunity to increase the number of minority women in the science field (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006).

Stewart was committed to strengthening the liberal arts curriculum at Spelman College and made other important contributions including establishing an honors program, increasing student quality and adding academic minor programs in international studies, information science and management (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006). His tenure may have been quiet but it had a lasting impact on the shape of the institution. Stewart resigned from his role as president in 1986 to become the president of the College Board. Vice-president of Academic Affairs Barbara Carter served as acting president until 1987.

### **1987–1997: THE BIG BOOM: THE JOHNNETTA B. COLE ADMINISTRATION**

In July of 1987 Johnnetta B. Cole became the first black female president

of Spelman College. In her 10-year tenure she had a tremendous list of achievements. She increased enrollments, attracted better students, enlarged the campus physical plant and increased the faculty. But, what she is most known for is her ability to fundraise and transforming the endowment of Spelman College by raising it to \$138 million, (Winbush, 1996; Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006).

The focus of Cole's administration was to fundraise in order to better position Spelman College for the future. When Cole decided to embark upon a 3-year \$81 million capital campaign many thought she was embarking upon an impossible mission. She surprised everyone when she was able to raise \$113 million, the largest amount ever for an HBCU at that time (Winbush, 1996). Though the goals of the campaign included raising the endowment and activating the donor base, another goal was to support a new \$22 million science complex to build on Stewart's foundation of a strong science program.

Cole also had a variety of other fundraising accomplishments. She received a grant from the Dewitt Wallace Reader's Digest Fund for \$37 million and she also received \$20 million from Bill and Camille Cosby, the largest individual gift to an HBCU (Winbush, 1996; Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006). She also forged valuable corporate relationships and developed the Spelman Corporate Partnership Program, which included 57 corporations and raised over \$12 million (Winbush, 1996).

The success of the capital campaign provided Spelman with the funds

necessary to grow physically and academically. Cole was able to build the science complex an academic center, which was named after Bill and Camille Cosby (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006). Cole's fundraising and planning efforts helped position Spelman as a leading HBCU and liberal arts institution. She left Spelman in 1997 and would later go on to lead Bennett College for Women, the nation's other HBWC.

### **1997–2002: SUCCESS IN THE SHADOWS: THE AUDREY F. MANLEY ADMINISTRATION**

In 1997 Audrey F. Manley was selected to serve as the eighth president of Spelman, the first alumna selected for the position. She was also the wife of the first black president of Spelman College, Albert E. Manley. Before beginning her tenure as president Manley served as a professor of pediatrics and obstetrics at Howard University, Emory University and the University of Chicago. Later she also served several federal positions including US Deputy Surgeon General (spelman.edu, 2010).

Assuming the presidency after Johnetta B. Cole was no easy task, many administrators questioned her leadership and many students felt they no longer had a voice on campus (Suggs, 15, July 2007). However, Manley was able to garner external support, most evident through her fundraising (*Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 8 November 2001). In Manley's 5-year tenure Spelman's endowment grew by \$63 million, the physical plant grew by more than \$50 million, and she completed the fundraising for the \$30.8 million Spelman Science Complex (*Diverse Issues in Higher*



*Education*, 8 November 2001). During her presidency Manley was able to renovate several buildings, improve infrastructure and recruit the largest freshmen class in Spelman's history (*Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 8 November 2001). Spelman also became one of only four HBCUs to be awarded a chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society (Miller-Bernal and Poulson, 2006).

Toward the end of her presidency in 2002, Manley received a grant from the Lily Endowment to establish the Sisters Center for Women in Spiritual Discernment of Ministry, a women's spirituality center designed to provide a space for students to explore vocation, service, leadership and gender-specific issues (spelman.edu, 2010).

### **CONCLUSION: 2002-PRESENT: TODAY: THE BEVERLY D. TATUM ADMINISTRATION**

The current president of Spelman, Beverly Tatum, began her tenure in 2002. Also a gifted fundraiser, Tatum was able to secure a \$17 million gift to establish the Gordon-Zeto Fund, expand the curriculum to include Chinese language instruction, and provide opportunities for international travel and financial aid for international students (spelman.edu, 2010). NASA continued their commitment to the Women in Science and Engineering Program and in 2003 gifted Spelman with \$4.5 million for program enhancements (2010). In 2004 Spelman was one of six institutions to receive a \$4.2 million grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities to eliminate health disparities among

racial and ethnic minority groups (2010).

In October of 2009, in the midst of a national economic downturn, Tatum launched the most ambitious capital campaign in Spelman's history with the goal of raising \$150 million by 2015. Spelman, with one of the largest endowments for an HBCU at over \$350 million, had already raised over \$80 million towards the goal during the silent phase of the campaign (Haines, October 16, 2009). Tatum is confident the goal will be reached especially with the increased contributions from alumnae. She has increased alumnae giving to 39 percent in 2010, the highest rate in Spelman's history; this includes an 8 percent increase over 2009 giving rates (Gasman, August 27, 2010).

Tatum also made two important additions to the Spelman College faculty in 2009, former Atlanta mayor Shirley Franklin and vice-president at the Ford Foundation Alison Bernstein (Diamond, 24 November 2009). These two new hires, while adding to the academic program at Spelman, also bring with them a wealth of resources and relationships, which may help Spelman, continue to position itself as a leader in the future. Tatum has also been able to attract gifts from corporate partners and in 2010 the College received several financial gifts. In February Walmart donated \$87000 to launch a leadership program for first-year, first-generation students, in March United Parcel Service (UPS) provided \$50000 to continue the community service scholarship they have supported for 15 years, and in April Exxon Mobile pledged \$1 million for scholarships for engineering majors (spelman.edu, 2010). Tatum's legacy is still a work in progress but her record

of fundraising success is an asset that will surely advantage Spelman in the future.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The connection between philanthropy and the curriculum is uncontested in the history of Spelman College. The institution was started with the help of northern white missionary philanthropists in 1881 and since then, with the help of religious organizations like the AME Church and the ABHMS, individual philanthropists like John D. Rockefeller, Laura Spelman and Bill and Camille Cosby, philanthropic organizations like the General Education Board and Lily Endowment, corporate partners like the Ford Foundation and the Spelman Alumnae Association, Spelman has grown and expanded to become one of the leading institutions in the nation boasting both a strong endowment and a strong curriculum.

To achieve the level of institutional success obtained by Spelman College the presidents used a variety of fundraising strategies still useful and transferable to today. These presidents navigated tough political, social and economic times and still found ways to enhance Spelman College by raising funds to refine, improve and expand the curriculum. Below are three key actions of Spelman College presidents used to drive philanthropic strategy that are transferrable to HBCUs contemporarily.

### **Recommendation 1: Identify funders who connect to your institutional mission and vision**

The importance of creating and communicating an institution's mission

and vision are vital to success in fundraising for curricular creation, development, and expansion. HBCUs must first be able to clearly communicate who they are and their current and future goals. In addition, HBCUs must carefully identify funders who connect with their institution's mission and vision.

Identifying funders who believe in the purpose of an institution may help forge a relationship that leads to continuous support. In the case of Spelman College, Packard and Giles were able to connect John D. Rockefeller with the Spelman's initial mission of teaching and missionary education. The initial Rockefeller support grew into a relationship that persisted for decades. Even as Spelman's mission and vision transitioned the relationship that had formed continued to grow. Rockefeller believed not only in what Spelman was, but he was invested in what Spelman was to become. HBCUs must not merely seek donors, instead they must focus on creating connections between their institution's mission and goals and funders who believe in them.

### **Recommendation 2: Infuse creativity and collaboration in your fundraising strategy**

Infusing creativity in the fundraising process is essential to success. Even more, identifying creative ways to collaborate can provide even greater opportunities for fundraising success. Fundraising is competitive and very often institutions are forced to compete for dollars from a limited number of funders. HBCUs must respond to this challenge by thinking creatively and collaboratively.

During Read's administration two creative and collaborative



organizations emerged that aided in fundraising and curricular development. Although Read was attempting to transition the Spelman curriculum to a more liberal arts focus she was also faced with declining philanthropic support. Solutions to these challenges emerged through the creation of two collaborative entities: the Atlanta University System and the UNCF. These collaborative entities forged relationships between Spelman and other HBCUs. Rather than competing with institutions with like challenges and goals, Spelman decided to partner with these institutions to ensure the survival and persistence of all of the institutions.

It is imperative that HBCUs continue to think creatively about how to raise funds. Creativity may mean new fundraising models and ideas or it may mean revising current strategies. It is also critical that HBCUs begin to think about opportunities to form partnerships with other HBCUs that are mutually beneficial. These partnerships could focus on enhancing academic programs or even on joint fundraising projects.

### **Recommendation 3: Engage alumni in giving**

Alumni involvement and engagement is especially important with the current downtrodden state of the economy. The recession continues to affect higher education financial support on the federal, state and philanthropic levels. Engaging alumni must become an important part of the fundraising strategy to provide institutions with additional streams of revenue. Beverly Tatum's administration is an example of the benefits of increasing alumni giving. Her success of raising Spelman's alumni giving to 39 percent

has allowed for her to launch and ambitious capital campaign in the mist of touch economic times.

HBCUs cannot afford to overlook alumni as they search for ways to raise money. Although time and energy should be devoted to cultivating giving in current students to develop future donors, HBCUs must reach out to their graduates to inform them of institutional success and needs and to request financial support to enhance and advance their former institutions. Alumni not only need to be engaged in the giving process, they must be engaged in it.

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