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## **National Merit Scholarship Corporation Renews Commitment to HBCUs with Donation to UNCF**

*Additional \$2.1 million investment to fund UNCF's Achievement Capstone Program*



*UNCF and NMSC officers gather with HBCU presidents at the Clark Atlanta University Dubois Statue Platform for the presentation of an additional \$2.1 million grant from NMSC for the Achievement Capstone Program. In attendance (from left to right) are UNCF Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer Mr. Maurice E. Jenkins, Jr.; Clark Atlanta University President Dr. George T. French, Jr.; UNCF President and CEO Dr. Michael L. Lomax; NMSC President and CEO Mr. Timothy E. McGuire; Morehouse College President Dr. David A. Thomas; and NMSC Executive Vice President Mr. Jeffrey Z. Little.*

**WASHINGTON, DC** (June 8, 2021)—On Thursday, June 3, 2021, National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®) and UNCF (United Negro College Fund) celebrated the success of the Achievement Capstone Program, a scholarship program that grants financial assistance to high-achieving, underrepresented college graduates at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs).

NMSC joined UNCF at Clark Atlanta University's Dubois Statue Platform to commemorate the scholarship's five-year milestone. During the celebration, NMSC President Timothy E. McGuire presented UNCF President Dr. Michael L. Lomax with an additional \$2.1 million grant for the Achievement Capstone Program.

For more than 50 years, NMSC conducted the National Achievement® Scholarship Program, which recognized and honored academically talented Black American high school students. Four million Black Americans entered the program, and approximately 228,000 received program recognition. Of those honored, more than 34,000 of the most outstanding participants were chosen to receive Achievement Scholarship® awards worth about \$108 million. The final group of high school students to be recognized in the program entered college in 2015. UNCF carries on the National Achievement Scholarship Program name and legacy through the UNCF Achievement Capstone Program, launched in 2016 with an initial investment of \$5 million from the National Achievement Scholarship Program. The additional investment of \$2.1 million is the remaining funds from the National Achievement Scholarship Program now that the obligations to the 2015 scholarship recipients have been fully met.

"UNCF is honored to continue the legacy of a program that has meant so much to Black college students who struggled to finance their higher education," said Lomax. "I am proud of the work that UNCF has done with this program in helping ensure a college degree is not only a dream but a possibility."

"NMSC is proud of our partnership with UNCF and their great work and stewardship to successfully carry on the name, mission, and important legacy of the National Achievement Scholarship Program which has recognized and honored so many talented Black American Scholars since the first awards were presented in 1965," said McGuire. "We believe this further investment in the Achievement Capstone Program is proof of our great confidence in UNCF to carry on this important mission for many years to come."

"The UNCF Achievement Capstone Program showed other grant organizations that I was capable of writing persuasive material and that I was a leader in my community," said Alexis Carey, a UNCF Achievement Capstone recipient and third-year Ph.D. candidate currently enrolled in the cellular and molecular medicine program at Johns Hopkins University. Carey is interested in the interface between aging, chronic inflammation and overall immune function. Her research allowed her to receive several prestigious awards including the Ford Predoctoral Fellowship Alternate/Honorable Mention in 2021 and the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program Honorable Mention in 2020. She plans to investigate the role that age-related changes to bone marrow play in the progression of melanoma. A 2018 graduate of Clark Atlanta University, Carey actively encourages young students through her participation as a peer mentor to basic science institute and summer internship program students.

"The UNCF Achievement Capstone Scholarship gave me the momentum to help achieve my dream of becoming an attorney and inspired me to give back to my community," said Tiquee

Brown, a UNCF Achievement Capstone recipient and second-year law student at Campbell University's Norman A. Wiggins School of Law. Brown provides leadership as the chief promotional officer for *Campbell Law Reporter* and the law student representative for the North Carolina Bar Association. He is an active member of the university's Diversity and Student Life Committee and Student Bar Association. A 2017 graduate of Winston-Salem State University, Brown served as a teacher and football coach within Catawba County School system. Upon graduation, he has a strong desire to pursue a career in education or public interest law.

"Students like Alexis Carey and Tiquece Brown are outstanding examples of the talent this particular scholarship empowers," Lomax added. "And, this additional investment will allow UNCF to turn those dreams into realities for more students at HBCUs and PBIs. For that, we are extremely grateful to NMSC for entrusting us with such a prestigious program."

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#### About NMSC



**National Merit Scholarship Corporation**

Honoring the academically talented students of the United States

National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®), a private, not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was founded in 1955 specifically to conduct the National Merit® Scholarship Program to recognize and honor the academically talented students of the United States. The majority of scholarships offered each year are underwritten by approximately 400 independent corporate and college sponsors, including NMSC, that share the Corporation's goals of honoring scholastically talented youth and encouraging academic excellence at all levels of education. The National Achievement® Scholarship Program was established by NMSC in 1964, contemporaneously with the passage of the Civil Rights Act, specifically to recognize and honor academically talented Black American high school students and to encourage their pursuit of higher education. To learn more about NMSC, visit the website at [www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org) and visit [NMSC News](#) for the latest program information and content that features Scholars.

#### About UNCF



UNCF (United Negro College Fund) is the nation's largest and most effective minority education organization. To serve youth, the community and the nation, UNCF supports students' education and development through scholarships and other programs, supports and strengthens its 37 member colleges and universities, and advocates for the importance of minority education and college readiness. UNCF institutions and other historically Black colleges and universities are highly effective, awarding nearly 20% of African American baccalaureate degrees. UNCF administers more than 400 programs, including scholarship, internship and fellowship, mentoring, summer enrichment, and curriculum and faculty development programs. Today, UNCF supports more than 60,000 students at over 1,100 colleges and universities across the country. Its logo features the UNCF torch of leadership in education and its widely recognized trademark, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste."® Learn more at [UNCF.org](http://UNCF.org) or for continuous updates and news, follow UNCF on Twitter at @UNCF.