

Famu's Record-Breaking Freshman Class Creates Scholarship Endowment Fund To Combat College Affordability Crisis

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, July 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University's (FAMU) [Freshman class of 2010](#), the largest incoming class in the historically black university's 137-year history, has established a scholarship endowment fund to address the nationwide decline in college enrollment and rising education costs.

The FAMU Freshman Class of 2010 endowment, created in partnership with the FAMU Foundation, aims to remove financial barriers that prevent students from accessing higher education. The initiative comes as undergraduate enrollment nationwide has dropped by more than 2 million students since its peak in 2011, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.



"Our class represented a significant increase in college access for underrepresented students when we arrived at FAMU," said Haley Arterberry.

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The endowment addresses three critical areas: lack of higher education access due to financial barriers, unmanageable student loan debt for graduates and support for retention efforts to strengthen graduation rates. "Now, 15 years later, we're working to ensure that the same opportunity exists for future generations," added T.C Atkinson. The fund will provide scholarships for first-

year students, out-of-state students, and graduate students.

The class has raised more than \$10,600 toward its scholarship endowment goal and is seeking community support to reach the finish line. The fundraising effort coincides with the class's 15th reunion celebration this fall, which operates under three pillars: unity, achievement and service.

FAMU's Freshman class of 2010 made history with its size (2,201 students), creating what university officials called a surge in the pursuit of higher education among emerging scholars. The class is now leveraging that collective impact to create lasting change in higher education accessibility.

"We're not just celebrating our reunion — we're creating a pipeline for educational access that will benefit students for generations to come," Austin Gaskin said.

The scholarship initiative directly responds to current data as 59% of Pell Grant recipients are Black students and the average cost of attendance at public institutions has increased by approximately 39.18% showing sustained challenges in higher education (Educational Data Initiative, 2024). Total college enrollment in the United States has been steadily declining for more than a decade, with financial hardship serving as a primary barrier for prospective students.

All donations to the FAMU Freshman Class of 2010's endowment are made directly through the FAMU Foundation and are tax-deductible. The endowment represents the class's commitment to ensuring that financial constraints do not prevent qualified students from pursuing higher education and career opportunities.

The class's approach reflects FAMU's broader mission of providing advanced educational access to students who might otherwise face obstacles to obtaining the college experience. For generations, FAMU has long served as a pathway to higher education, constantly expanding its resources to address the new challenges that each generation has faced within academia and student engagement.

Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University was founded in 1887 as a historically black public university located in Tallahassee, Fla. FAMU is known for its commitment to academic excellence and providing educational opportunities to underrepresented populations. The university serves more than 9,000 students across 13 schools and colleges.

For more information about the class endowment fund, visit the website by [clicking here](#). Or text "Freshman2010" to 71777.

Donation information can be [found here](#).

FAMU's Freshman Class of 2010

15th Year Reunion
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