

2026 Food Lion CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament Closes Black History Month with Ultimate Festival of Culture

Winston-Salem State University Women's Team and Fayetteville State University Men's Team Dominate the Paint

BALTIMORE, MD, UNITED STATES, March 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Central Intercollegiate](#)

[Athletic Association](#) (CIAA), the nation's oldest Historically Black athletic conference, closed out the 2026 Food Lion CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament in front of a roaring crowd at CFG Bank Arena in Baltimore on Saturday, February 28. Fueled by the sounds of HBCU brass bands, the championship final featured two high-stakes, single-elimination matchups that capped off an unforgettable week of competition and celebration.

“

This week in Baltimore captured the very best of the CIAA. This tournament showcases excellence on the court, opportunity off the court, and a community coming together with purpose.

”

CIAA Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams Parker

The weeklong championship tournament went down to the wire with the women's team for Winston-Salem State University facing off against Fayetteville State University; and Bluefield State University taking on Fayetteville State University for the men's championship game. In the end

Winston-Salem State University's Women's team and Fayetteville State University Men's team took home the trophies. Final scores were Women's Championship: Winston-Salem State University 60 vs. Fayetteville State University 43; Men's Championship: Fayetteville State University 71 vs Bluefield State University 68

“This week in Baltimore captured the very best of the CIAA,” said CIAA Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams Parker, “This tournament showcases excellence on the court, opportunity off the court, and a community coming together with purpose. Over 3,500 Baltimore high school students attended Education Day, and many received scholarships and on-the-spot admissions to CIAA HBCUs. More than 1,500 job seekers connected with over 60 employers on Career Day. Beyond that, we held seminars on financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and more. Community matters, and we are proud to partner with Visit Baltimore, Mayor Scott, Governor Moore, and the City of Baltimore.

"The CIAA Tournament is one of Baltimore's most impactful economic and cultural engines," said Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott. "Last year alone, it generated more than \$27 million in total economic impact and over \$15 million in direct spending, and since coming to Baltimore, it has delivered more than \$100 million to our regional economy. Equally important, the tournament drives inclusive growth, directing millions of dollars to minority-owned businesses and spotlighting Black-owned restaurants, retailers, and entrepreneurs across the city. This is more than a championship; it's a platform for community, opportunity, and upward mobility. Baltimore is proud to host an event that celebrates Black excellence, invests in our young people, and showcases the very best of our city."



2026 Food Lion CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament Logo

"Baltimore is absolutely buzzing with energy throughout the entire CIAA tournament. It truly feels like a homecoming, a true celebration of community and culture," said Kireem Swinton, President and CEO of Visit Baltimore. "What makes this week so special is the way it goes beyond the games to meaningfully engage our youth and spotlights the power of HBCU culture. From Career Day to the Health Summit, Tech Summit, and Money Moves events, Visit Baltimore and our partners at the city and state are proud to deliver programming that drives real impact for our community while simultaneously embracing all fans visiting our city."

Each year, alumni, students, families, and fans across the country head to the CIAA Tournament in Charm City to close out Black History Month at one of the most anticipated sporting events in America. The Tournament delivers a full-scale cultural experience, including Fan Fest, Career Expo/Education Day/Community Service Initiatives, Step Shows/A-List Performances/CIAA Parties, The John B. McClendon Jr. CIAA Hall of Fame Breakfast, and Town halls and symposiums focused on education, health, financial wellness, and innovation.

Gabby Samone, Marsha Ambrosius, Mike Phillips and K Camp brought down the house plus 2 Chainz, Mya, Frank Ski, DJ Quicksilva, DJ Denny K. Supa DJ Big L, Heavy Hitter, Lance Gross, Slutty Vegan Founder Pinky Cole Hayes, Entrepreneur Fawn Weaver, WNBA Legend Sonia Chase, and more were on site to celebrate Black History and CIAA Championship weekend.

An estimated 65,000 alumni, students, families, and fans across the country attended the event this year. The CIAA is celebrated as more than a championship tournament “#February Is CIAA,” a living annual celebration of Black excellence, legacy, and HBCU pride.

For more about the CIAA, visit ciaatournament.org, like us on Facebook, and follow us on X, Instagram, and Twitch.

Jennifer McIntosh
MARC Global Communications
+1 480-202-7112

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[X](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/896539174>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our [Editorial Guidelines](#) for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.