

Albany State University Student Selected for Prestigious Howard University Pre-Ph.D. Summer Enrichment Program

Albany State University Political Science Major, Leah Cowen, Participated In The Highly Competitive Pre-Ph.D. Summer Enrichment Program at Howard University.

ALBANY, GA, UNITED STATES, June 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Albany State University](#) (ASU) [political science](#) senior from Birmingham, Alabama, Leah Cowen, is expanding her academic and professional horizons this summer as a participant in the highly competitive Pre-Ph.D. Summer Enrichment Program at Howard University.

Designed to prepare high-achieving students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) for doctoral-level study, the program provides participants with intensive exposure to graduate-level research, mentorship from faculty scholars, and guidance on navigating the Ph.D. application process. Cowen was among a select group of students chosen nationwide to participate in this transformative experience.

Cowen has distinguished herself at Albany State through academic excellence, leadership, and service. She is a Dean's List scholar, a member of multiple honor societies, and has contributed more than 400 hours of community service during her time at the university. She has also interned with The Law Offices of Maurice Luther King Jr., and the Honorable Judge Johnson at the Dougherty Magistrate Court.

"The experience was amazing. I was able to understand the process of a Ph.D. program, the art of research, and the many opportunities available beyond academia. The faculty poured into us in a way that was truly impactful."

- Leah Cowen, Albany State University Political Science Senior



Leah Cowen

Throughout the program, Cowen explored how research can be applied to real-world challenges, aligning closely with her academic interests. Her research examines how restrictive policies, such as zoning and preservation laws, affect housing and community development in rural areas. This is an area of study that reflects her commitment to public service and community impact.

Cowen credits Albany State University with preparing her for the opportunity through a strong academic foundation and emphasis on professionalism and leadership. ASU arts and humanities faculty member, Dr. Rondrea Mathis, referred Cowen to the program.

“The Golden Standard Introduction was one of the first tools I used, and it helped me make a lasting first impression. My research experience at Albany State, along with support from faculty and opportunities like the Annual Research Symposium, gave me the confidence to succeed in this program.”
- Leah Cowen, Albany State University Political Science Senior

Beyond academics, Cowen has demonstrated exceptional leadership across campus. She is a member of the Delta Rho Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, serves as a Holley Ambassador, and is actively involved in several academic and professional organizations, including the History and Political Science Club and Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honor Society.

Her participation in the Howard program has further strengthened her aspirations to pursue a doctorate in Public Administration and a career in government.

“Public service is a calling that I have answered. My experiences at Albany State and in the community have shown me the impact government can have. I am preparing to help my community grow and thrive.

- Leah Cowen, Albany State University Political Science Senior

Cowen also emphasized a key lesson from her summer experience: the importance of purpose.



Albany State University Official Stacked Logo



ASU C.W. Grant Student Union



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Leah Cowen, Albany State University Political Science Senior

“When pursuing a Ph.D., do it for yourself. When your goals are personal, it shows in your work and makes the journey more meaningful.”

- Leah Cowen, Albany State University Political Science Senior

Cowen’s selection reflects Albany State University’s commitment to preparing students for advanced study and leadership roles across industries. Through mentorship, research opportunities, and professional development, ASU continues to cultivate scholars who are equipped to make meaningful contributions locally, nationally, and globally.

Rachel Lawrence
Albany State University
+1 229-364-6683
[email us here](#)

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