

Albany State University's HBCU-UP Program Demonstrates Strong First-Year Success, Expands for Fall 2026

Albany State University's HBCU-UP STEM Academy Is Expanding Opportunities For Student Success In STEM. The Program Enters Its Second Year With 35 Students.

ALBANY, GA, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Albany State University](#) (ASU) is building momentum in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education through the continued success of its HBCU Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP) STEM Academy, a key initiative supported by a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant aimed at increasing recruitment, retention, and on-time graduation of underrepresented students in STEM fields.



HBCU-Up Students

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We are not only preparing students to succeed academically, but also equipping them to become leaders, researchers, and mentors who will contribute meaningfully to the STEM workforce.”

Dr. Chinenye Ofodile, Albany State University

Now entering its second year, the program supports students majoring in Biology, Computer Science, Engineering, Forensic Science, and Psychology by providing academic, financial, and community-based resources designed to ensure long-term success.

The inaugural cohort of 15 students demonstrated strong academic and personal growth throughout the 2025–2026 academic year. The group achieved a cumulative GPA increase from 3.13 in Fall 2025 to 3.16 by Summer 2026, while also contributing 331 hours of community service. Students also engaged in high-impact experiences, and earned top honors at ASU’s 14th Annual Undergraduate

Research Symposium, where three participants tied for first place in the poster presentation competition.

A hallmark of the program is its intentional, student-centered support system. Through structured mentorship, cohort-based learning, and targeted academic development, students are equipped with the tools needed to thrive in rigorous STEM disciplines.

One student's journey highlights the transformative impact of the program. After being placed on academic probation following the fall semester, the student worked closely with program leadership to develop a personalized academic plan focused on time management, study strategies, and accountability. By the end of the spring semester, the student earned all A's.

"The HBCU-UP program helped me learn how to manage my time, stay focused, and believe in my ability to succeed. Having that support system made all the difference for me."
- Nigeria Numa, Sophomore Forensic Science Major, Albany State University

Participants in HBCU-UP receive more than \$1,000 in financial support during their first year, including \$500 stipends at the end of both the fall and spring semesters, as well as a TI-84 graphing calculator to support their coursework. Beyond financial assistance, students benefit from a sustained system of academic and social support, including specialized coursework, mentoring, and opportunities for research and experiential learning.

"The success of our first cohort demonstrates the power of intentional support, community, and high expectations. We are not only preparing students to succeed academically, but also



HBCU-Up Students Two



Albany State University Official Stacked Logo



ASU C.W. Grant Student Union

equipping them to become leaders, researchers, and mentors who will contribute meaningfully to the STEM workforce.”

-Dr. Chinenye Ofodile, Director of the HBCU-UP Program and Chair of the Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Physics, Albany State University

As the program continues into Fall 2026, 21 new students have been accepted into the next cohort, and there are 14 returning participants. The semester will begin with an orientation on August 19 and will include a robust schedule of academic sessions, workshops, and engagement opportunities.

Students will participate in Saturday academies featuring coursework in physics, biology, chemistry, computer science, English, mathematics, and college readiness, along with field trips and interactive learning experiences. Additional programming throughout the semester will include mentorship pairings, mental wellness support, academic planning sessions, and community-building events designed to strengthen student engagement and success.

The program’s learning community model ensures that students progress together throughout their academic journey, building lasting relationships with peers, faculty, and mentors. As participants advance, they are also given the opportunity to mentor incoming students, reinforcing a cycle of leadership and support.

As Albany State University continues to invest in innovative programs like HBCU-UP, the institution reaffirms its commitment to expanding access, strengthening outcomes, and preparing the next generation of STEM leaders.

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