

Albany State University Student Darren Smith Represents 2026 BET Next Gen Ambassador Program

Albany State University Junior Darren Smith Was Selected For The 2026 BET Next Gen Ambassador Program.

ALBANY, GA, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Darren J. Smith II, a junior at [Albany State University](#) (ASU), was chosen from over 2,700 applications nationwide to serve as the university's sole representative for the 2026 BET Next Gen Ambassador Program. The leadership development program offers participants practical experience in the entertainment business and is intended for students interested in media creation, marketing communications, and public relations.

Smith, a Jacksonville, Florida native, and [mass communication](#) major, participated in the competitive program with students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) nationwide. He collaborated with business experts to support red carpet operations, media relations, and event logistics during BET Awards Week in Los Angeles, California. Additionally, he had the chance to engage with celebrities, media executives, and communications specialists, which gave him priceless practical experience in public relations and entertainment communications.

"My experience in the 2026 BET Next Gen Ambassador Program was truly life changing. It provided me with an inside look at the entertainment industry and allowed me to work behind the scenes alongside industry professionals while interacting with some of today's biggest celebrities. Every day challenged me to grow, and I left the program with valuable knowledge, meaningful relationships and an even greater passion for the entertainment and media industry."

- Darren Smith, Mass Communication Major, Albany State University

For Smith, one of the program's greatest lessons was learning how to thrive in a fast-paced



Darren Smith

environment.

"The greatest lesson I learned was the importance of remaining diligent, adaptable and prepared. The entertainment industry moves quickly, and success often comes down to being able to adjust, solve problems under pressure and maintain a positive attitude. This experience reinforced that preparation and consistency are just as important as talent."

- Darren Smith, Mass Communication Major, Albany State University

Smith attributes his preparation for the opportunity to Albany State University's leadership experiences, which enhanced his professionalism, communication, and problem-solving skills.

"Albany State prepared me by placing me in leadership positions that required professionalism, innovation and the ability to perform under pressure. Those experiences gave me the confidence to step into a national platform like BET and represent Albany State with pride and excellence."

- Darren Smith, Mass Communication Major, Albany State University



Darren Smith BET Awards

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*Darren Smith, Mass
Communication Major,
Albany State University*

Throughout his time at ASU, Smith has established himself as an engaged student leader. He serves as Vice President of Operations for the Student Activities Advisory Board (SAAB) and previously, as the Sophomore Class Vice President, while remaining active in the Holley Ambassadors and ASU Kings. He has also completed more than 50 hours of volunteer service during his time at the university.

His accomplishments include being recognized as the highest-ranking sophomore in mass communication, serving as a Royal Court Escort, earning SAAB's Sophomore

Class Standout and Content Creator of the Year honors, and receiving the Student Government Association's Ascending Influence Award, Rising Leader Award and Get It Done Award.

Smith has established a significant online presence in addition to his leadership on campus. Together with fellow student Ariel Kizer, he co-founded 504CollegeDr, a student-focused Instagram platform that showcases Albany State news, student accomplishments, and

opportunities. His ability to create digital material and convey sports stories is further demonstrated by the fact that his sports media platform, Dsmoove Sports, has had over a million views.

Looking ahead, Smith hopes to pursue a career as a sports anchor, media personality or television host. As he continues building his career in media, Smith says one lesson continues to guide his journey.

"Success isn't about being better than the person beside you. It's about becoming better than the person you were yesterday."

- Darren Smith, Mass Communication Major, Albany State University

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ASU C.W. Grant Student Union

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