

Building Bridges Education: The HBCU Desert in New England Is No More

For New England students, an HBCU future is no longer a distant dream, it's a pathway to opportunity and possibility.

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES,
September 25, 2026 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- For students across New England, access to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) can still feel like a pathway that exists somewhere else. With no HBCUs located in any of the six New England states, opportunities for students to experience HBCU campuses, build relationships with admissions leaders, and navigate the pathway to enrollment can be limited.



Where Opportunity Meets Possibility

For the past six years, Building Bridges Education (BBE) has been working to change that. From October 14-16, 2026, BBE will host its annual Building Bridges HBCU Program, bringing together students, families, educators, HBCU admissions leaders and community partners, for a week focused on college access, opportunity, leadership, research, and the enduring legacy of HBCUs.

“

Our work is about more than opening doors. It is about building pathways that help students walk through them and reach their full potential.”

*Dr. Keith C. Lezama Jr.,
Founder*

The 2026 program marks the continued growth of what has become the largest HBCU-focused initiative in New England, with more than 90 high schools from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maine expected to participate. Since its expansion, Building Bridges Education's HBCU Program has connected

thousands of students directly with HBCUs, helping them secure more than \$13 million in scholarships and facilitating more than 750 college acceptances at their events.

The HBCU College Fair, Interview Day & Career and Pathways Expo will take place on Thursday, October 15, at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in Boston. Students from across New England will engage directly with HBCU admissions representatives, explore academic programs and scholarship opportunities, participate in on-site interviews, and connect with organizations and professionals through the newly expanded Career & Pathways Expo, held in partnership with the Boston Public Schools Office of College, Career & Life Readiness.

The fair is expected to welcome more than 2,500 students, from over 90 high schools from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maine - providing students with direct access to admissions leaders.

Participating HBCUs include several of the nation's most highly ranked HBCUs. According to the 2027 U.S. News HBCU rankings, the top 10 include Spelman College, Howard University, Tuskegee University, Morehouse College, North Carolina A&T State University, Florida A&M University, Hampton University, Morgan State University, Xavier University of Louisiana, and Claflin University.

The on-site interview component has become one of the program's most impactful features. In 2025, on-site interviews resulted in 179 college acceptances and more than \$4.4 million in scholarship offers over four years. BBE is working to surpass those results in 2026.

The fair will also introduce the expanded Career & Pathways Expo, creating opportunities for students to connect with employers, organizations, educators, and professionals across a range of industries and career fields. The expanded experience reflects BBE's partnership with the Boston Public Schools helping students see college not simply as an endpoint, but as a pathway to career, leadership, and economic opportunity.

The week also features the Building Bridges HBCU Summit, at Harvard University, bringing together higher education leaders, educators, researchers, community leaders, and other stakeholders to explore the future of higher ed access, partnerships, and student success.

During HBCU Week, Building Bridges Education will also highlight its partnership with Clark Atlanta University (CAU), welcoming university leaders to share the launch of its Boston presence and new opportunities for educators and education professionals across New England. Through its graduate programming, CAU will offer pathways for educators seeking advanced degrees in K-12 Leadership, Higher Education Leadership, and a Master of Arts in Teaching, along with certificates in educational leadership and teaching.

BBE is also beginning a new partnership with the Dr. N. Joyce Payne Research Center, the research arm of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, expanding the work beyond college access to include research, data, and a deeper understanding of the HBCU experience. Leaders from the Payne Research Center will also join Building Bridges during HBCU Week to connect national research with the experiences and aspirations of students and communities across New

England.

The week will conclude with its annual Legacy Gala - a gathering around a shared belief: that every young person deserves the opportunity to discover their potential, pursue their dreams, and have a community willing to help them along the way.

Inspired by the enduring spirit of service, collective responsibility, and the belief that our lives are connected, the evening will celebrate the people and partnerships that make opportunity possible.

Dr. Lezama said, "We honor the achievements of our students, celebrate the power of education, and recommit ourselves to building pathways that expand possibilities for the next generation. Every student deserves the opportunity to see themselves in a college classroom, believe that they belong there, and have the support to turn that vision into reality. Through our work, we are committed to making that possible."

- Dr. Keith C. Lezama Jr., Founder & CEO, Building Bridges Education

[About Building Bridges Education](#)

Building Bridges Education (BBE) is a nonprofit at the forefront of designing transformative, high-impact college access programming that challenges systemic barriers and expands educational opportunity. Grounded in identity, belonging, and research-informed practice, BBE works to make higher education accessible, attainable, and sustainable for students who have historically been underrepresented in college and degree attainment, particularly students who have been historically and systematically marginalized within educational systems.

For more information about Building Bridges Education, the 2026 HBCU Program, registration, sponsorship opportunities, or media inquiries, visit www.BuildingBridgesEd.org

[email us here](#)

Dr. Keith C. Lezama, Founder

Building Bridges Education

Visit us on social media:

[Instagram](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/945268811>

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.