

TADOHE

MARCH 2022 SPOTLIGHT
HBCU CELEBRATION SERIES

PAGE 01

This issue: **Huston-Tillotson University**

HBCUs have long been a cornerstone of the Black community. With the majority of them being founded a few years after the passing of the Emancipation Proclamation, they represent the desire that the Black community has for collective advancement through education.

This is one of the main reasons TADOHE wanted to utilize our platform to spotlight our Texas HBCUs and their accomplishments over the years. It is so important to value and celebrate these spaces because they foster the diversity and inclusion that TADOHE and our national association, NADOHE, were created to support.

Huston-Tillotson Mission Statement & Vision

Mission Statement:

HT nurtures a legacy of leadership and excellence in education, connecting knowledge, power, passion, and values.

Vision:

A connected world where diversity of thought matters.



A Brief History of Huston-Tillotson University

PAGE 02

Huston-Tillotson University actually began as two separate institutions. Tillotson College was chartered in 1877 as Tillotson Collegiate and Normal Institute. Nearly a decade later, in December of 1887, Samuel Huston, a farmer from Marengo, Iowa, would donate property estimated to be worth \$10,000, with the understanding that the school would bear his name. Samuel Huston College was chartered in 1910 as a private educational corporation under the laws of Texas. Located less than one mile apart in East Austin, the institutions enjoyed healthy competition and rivalry in athletic programs, cooperation in student activities, and collegial relationships among the faculty, staff, and students.

However, despite periods of relative prosperity, neither college enjoyed a wealth of material or financial resources. Because of their mutual interests, values, and constituencies, the trustees of Samuel Huston College and Tillotson College met jointly on January 26, 1952, and agreed to detailed plans for merging the two institutions on the site (then known as “Bluebonnet Hill”) of Tillotson College. The merger was consummated, and the new Charter of Incorporation for Huston-Tillotson College was signed on October 24, 1952. The merged institutions adopted “In union, strength” as their motto.

Following the merger, Huston-Tillotson College became the sole provider of higher education for African-Americans in Central Texas until the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which launched the period of desegregation. Today the College continues to both honor and foster its relationship with its founding denominations as well as its ethnic heritage.

On February 28, 2005, the institution advanced its mission further by changing the name to Huston-Tillotson University.



Huston-Tillotson University Highlights

PAGE 03

Ram Connect

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Huston-Tillotson utilized support funds to launch RAM CONNECT! New students will receive a Surface Pro 7 at the start of the term, fully loaded with all necessary software, such as Canvas, Microsoft 365, and more to promote academic success.

Career Connections

Huston-Tillotson University partnered with the UNCF® Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) to provide a seamless path from college to career. Students who are considering majoring in business administration, communication, computer science, criminal justice, education, Kinesiology, or mathematics will have the opportunity to engage in a four-year individualized academic experience that will lead to a career upon graduation.

During the Summer of 2021, The fifth class of Huston-Tillotson University's Ram Career Connections program began. It kicked off with a virtual orientation as some of the newest members of the #GeniusGeneration began their HT journey.

A total of 20 students from Texas to Nigeria participated in the program's opening, with the goal of providing a seamless path from college to career.

"We make it our intention to speak positivity into your life, and to speak positivity into the future of your success," said Wayne Knox, Huston-Tillotson University's Vice President and Chief Operating Officer as he addressed this year's cohort. "That's why we call you the Genius Generation because we know you are untapped potential. One of our responsibilities here on campus is to tap into that potential to show you who you are."

Directed by the Office of Enrollment Management, HT is one of 24 colleges and universities that received a grant as part of the UNCF Career Pathways Initiative, a transformative effort to design and implement programs to improve employment outcomes for graduates.

Homecoming

February was a special time for Huston-Tillotson University. Not only was the university celebrating Black History Month. It also marked the return of the university's homecoming A.K.A. The fRAMily Reunion. This year's theme was fittingly "Back In Full Effect". The week of events took place from February 13th to February 19th. Some of the events that were put on by the university and its alumni association included, kickball tournament, skate night, comedy show, a brunch, a battle of DJs, and more.

An institution is only as good as those who lead it. We would be remiss if we did not take space to show our appreciation and shine the spotlight on Huston-Tillotson University's President.

Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette

Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette serves as the president and CEO of Huston-Tillotson University, making strides to create change in equity and education. She is the first female president of the merged Huston-Tillotson University and only the second female president in the institution's 140-year history. She serves on numerous boards and committees, including the Greater Austin Area Black Chamber, Colleges and Universities, Austin Community Foundation, DISCO, Texas Methodist Foundation, Frontier Bank, Greater Austin Urban League, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Texas Advisory Council, Urban Roots Advisory Council, and Waterloo Greenway Board.



A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Pierce Burnette received her high school diploma from John F. Kennedy High School, a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from The Ohio State University, and a Master of Science in Administration from Georgia College. She is a graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Management Development Program and received her Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Pierce Burnette is married to Retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Daarel Burnette and they have two children, Daarel II of Rockville, Maryland and Daana of Los Angeles, California.

Dr. Pierce Burnette is on a mission to elevate Huston-Tillotson University to the highest ranks and amplify its presence as the "intellectual heartbeat of East Austin." Dr. Pierce Burnette carries out her mission near and far before small and large groups. You can take a listen to her moving messages and take a look at her "village" of believers on her student-focused mission on the Huston-Tillotson website at: <https://htu.edu/offices/office-of-the-president>

***"Education is the great equalizer and not an option."
– Dr. Pierce Burnette***