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Letter from the Publisher

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

November 2020

Dear *JCES* Readers:

Welcome to our first special issue of *JCES*, one drawn entirely from the excellent research into the scholarship of engagement occurring at America's historically black colleges and universities, perhaps best known by the abbreviation HBCU.

This issue features work taking place at several well-known HBCUs from four different states and includes Clayton State University, Tennessee State University, Augusta University, and Alabama State University.

Among the topics explored are rural healthcare and the use of telehealth as a tool for reaching more patients; developments in HBCU service-learning and civic engagement courses; and even one article on international community engagement.

There is agreement among the authors that HBCUs were slow to enter the field of engagement scholarship, but judging from what we are seeing in the research presented in this issue, they are rapidly catching up, or perhaps returning to their roots?

One of the most obvious takeaways from this special issue is the variety of topics and methods applied in the projects presented. They include, as already mentioned, service-learning and civic engagement but other topics as well, for example, how icons like Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois could both be considered pioneers of engaged scholarship (authors McFarlane-Alvarez and McDonald); how HBCUs continue to contribute to a culturally competent workforce (authors Nelson and Lang-Lindsley); how HBCUs have joined in the efforts to give students the advantage of an international education experience (authors Walters and Nwagwu); the importance of early childhood education in Tennessee's workforce development (Coleman); and how visual arts can be a catalyst for inquiry into relationships that are *transformative* for the student (Gadsden).

In fact, if there is one word that best describes the research presented in this special issue of *JCES*, it is "transformative," which means "dramatic change." We believe these papers, each in their own way, have the potential to do just that.



Samory T. Pruitt

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