

IMPACT

Benedict College Shows its Tiger Pride as "HBCU of the Year"



BENEDICT COLLEGE'S CHAPEL AT CLACK PLAZA



DR. ROSLYN CLARK ARTIS TALKS TO STUDENTS ON THE BENEDICT COLLEGE LIBRARY PLAZA



DR. ROSLYN CLARK ARTIS, PRESIDENT, BENEDICT COLLEGE



STUDENTS USE COMPUTERS AT THE UNCF CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE NODE AT BENEDICT COLLEGE

U NCF-member HBCUs are laboratories of greatness and deliver a huge amount of impact for their size—or as we at UNCF like to say, they “punch above their weight.” And Benedict College located in Columbia, SC, is continuing that tradition.

In August 2019, Benedict received the top honor of “HBCU of the Year” at the annual HBCU Awards ceremony hosted by HBCU Digest. After the announcement, Benedict College President and CEO Dr. Roslyn Clark Artis said, “...the receipt of the coveted ‘HBCU of the Year’ Award, reflect[s] the hard work and commitment of the entire Tiger Pride! Now, the rest of the world knows that we are collectively, ‘TheBESTofBC.’”

The overall purpose of the HBCU Awards, according to HBCU Digest, is to reflect the vision, innovation and progress of the entire campus community.

How did the small UNCF-member college win such a prestigious honor? In part, Benedict successfully implemented a new tuition pricing model that reduced the cost of attendance for students by more than \$6,000 per year. Benedict was the first HBCU to significantly reduce its tuition in decades.

While making Benedict more affordable was just one accomplishment, the admission standards were also increased, and enrollment records exceeded each of the two prior years. With its increased admissions standards, Benedict was able to enroll three high school valedictorians, improve its student profile and increase its retention rates.

To celebrate the honor of being named “HBCU of the Year,” the Benedict staff and student body gathered for a rally to cheer on their college campus. Leading the cheers of the crowd was Benedict’s Student

Government Association President Jordan Rice Woodruff, who shouted out, “I cannot think of a better way to start our school year than to be the reigning ‘HBCU of the Year!’”

“It was an honor to be in the midst of HBCUs across the country and to celebrate our achievements in academics, sports and individual achievements, and that makes our win extra special,” said Dr. Emmanuel Lalande, vice president of enrollment management for Benedict College.

Benedict College was nominated in six categories in 2019, including “Female President of the Year,” the third consecutive nomination for Benedict’s President Artis, who won that honor in 2018.

“I am so excited to be a member of the BC family. And I am especially excited to work hard this year so that we can come back next year because ‘TheBESTofBC’ is still yet to come!” said Joana Arauz, recruiter for Benedict College.

Benedict also has an innovative Summer Bridge Program, a five-week, academic and leadership development program designed to provide a seamless transition for recommended first-year students to get an early start on preparing for success in college; improved academic support services; cutting-edge science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs; renowned visual and performing arts programs; and an award-winning UNCF Career Pathways Initiative®.

And, the advancement of Benedict has not gone unnoticed by its alumni. According to Dr. Artis, “Benedict Alumni are among the most generous and dedicated HBCU alumni in the country, donating over \$1 million per year for four consecutive years.”

To top off its achievements for the year, Benedict College was also awarded the 2019 American Council on Education Fidelity Investments Award for Institutional Transformation. The award recognizes institutions across the United States that have responded to higher education challenges in innovative and creative ways and achieved dramatic changes in a brief period. Benedict was the second historically Black college or university and the first private college to receive this national recognition.

With such phenomenal achievements, Benedict’s progress can only continue skyward—progress that delivers impact which makes a difference for students, empowering them to compete and succeed across the globe.

Benedict’s work, much like the work of all other UNCF-member HBCUs, truly is an investment in better futures for us all.

