



SpencerFane®

Spencer Fane Celebrates History of HBCUs for Juneteenth

Spencer Fane was pleased to hold a special virtual event on June 12 in anticipation of Juneteenth. The event welcomed special guest Dr. Magana Kabugi, an African American Literature professor at Fisk University, for a discussion on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) alongside attorneys [Paz Haynes](#) and [Brittainy Joyner](#).

Sponsored by Spencer Fane connect group Black Opportunities to Network and Discover (BOND), this engaging panel delved into the rich history, achievements, and challenges faced by HBCUs such as Fisk, Howard University, and Spelman College from their inception after Emancipation to the present day. This exploration illustrated the pivotal role HBCUs played during the Civil Rights Movement and beyond while also highlighting notable alumni such as Charles Houston Hamilton, Pauli Murray, Thurgood Marshall, Walter Leonard, Diane Nash, and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Dr. Kabugi also explained the impact of recent changes in Affirmative Action policies as well as consistent underfunding for HBCUs. Statistics he shared – that only 10% of Black students attend HBCUs but they produce 40% of Black engineers, 50-60% of Black attorneys, 70% of Black doctors, and 80% of Black judges – emphasized the continued importance of HBCUs even amid such challenges.

As an alumna of Howard University, Brittainy provided a firsthand account of how HBCUs serve as safe spaces for African American students who are set up for success through invested, thoughtful educators.

"Growing up, I always saw the impact of HBCUs," she said, noting her upbringing in North Carolina, which has the most HBCUs of any state. She shared that her decision

to go to Howard stemmed from knowing she'd find "a community that understood the struggles that I was going through."

Learn more about Spencer Fane BOND and other diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives [here](#).