

Dear Members and Friends of the Purdue Black Caucus of Faculty and Staff:

After 50 years, and with reluctance, the Caucus will pause hosting our signature student-focused Annual Awards Program for April 2026. In considering both the uniqueness of the accomplishment of this event, and the special logistical challenges we face this year, The Executive Committee concluded that it would be wise and practical to take this time to consider our challenges, reflect on our accomplishments, and look to our next half century.

CONSIDERING OUR CHALLENGES

The Caucus came together 50 years ago as a commitment of staff members and faculty to creating independent space for mutual support and concern around African American issues at Purdue; this included a special vision for recognizing the accomplishments of Black students that commonly went unrecognized. The current challenges for this vision include disruptions in staff and faculty positions at the university, as well as restricted access to the information and resources BCFS has used in the past to organize our annual event. This is a particular loss: if things are tough for faculty and staff members, we know that they are tough for the students about whom we care, since they have less experience and fewer robust coping skills.

...however, over the years, the members and friends of the Caucus have faced challenges to our gathering (as during COVID), the loss of many of our founders and long-time members to retirement and to homegoing, receptivity of campus administrations to meeting with us, and changes in national and state policies. Our history has taught us to be resilient in the face of adversity.

REFLECTING ON OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over five decades, the Caucus done much of which it can take pride. Our signature Awards Program was a unique conception, not just for its focus on African American students, but for its independence. Funded in its early years by proceeds from a Caucus-sponsored dance, the Awards Program was always the result of the vision and efforts of volunteers and supporters, independent of any University office or entity. The Program has celebrated the academic achievements, service, and leadership of literally thousands of students, with keynote speakers from among our own faculty and staff ranks, as well as leaders from industry, distinguished alumni, athletics, and higher education. The Caucus also has sponsored Black history movie nights with Purdue's Black Student Union, hosted welcome back and holiday celebrations with eh the Black Graduate Student Associations. We have met with University officials to insure procedural justice for members during University proceedings, worked with the University to enact policies that significantly diversified academic leadership at Purdue, and met regularly to address our concern with senior University officials including Presidents, Provosts, and Treasurers. The Caucus also has sponsored programming that provided tips for financial, physical, mental well-being, as well as Fun Fridays that taught line dancing, and games that brought members and friends around Black History knowledge. NO OTHER Black faculty and

staff organization in the United States can claim such an inclusive, effective, and continuous history. Who else is better positioned to uphold our interests?

STARTING THE NEXT HALF CENTURY

The Annual Awards Program WILL return, after this pause. The members and friends of the Purdue Black Caucus of Faculty and Staff should expect to host our students and their loved ones, as well as our coworkers and colleagues once again. For the remainder of this year, look out for

- Our general membership meetings on Tuesday March 10 and April 14, at noon;
- Invitation for a follow-up face-to-face meeting with Provost Patrick Wolfe;
- And mementos for each of our dues-paid members.

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Who else is better positioned to uphold our interests?

The Purdue Black Caucus of Faculty and Staff: NOW MORE THAN EVER.