Enhancing Department of Defense Engagements with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Other Minority Serving Institutions

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The commissioned paper below was written by Mr. John Rosenthall, President of Tougaloo College Research and Development Foundation. Mr. Rosenthall was tasked by the committee to provide his perspective on historic and current challenge, and successes in stakeholder efforts to build and expand research capacity at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions. The opinions expressed in this paper reflect the views of the author, many of which apply to the broader institutional category of Minority Serving Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

For nearly four decades, Congress has been taking steps to enhance DoD engagement with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Institutions (MIs). Beginning in 1987, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) directed the DoD to award 5% of the total amount obligated for procurement, research, development, test, evaluation, military construction, operation, and maintenance to small business concerns owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SBDs), HBCUs, and other MIs. (The National Defense Authorization Act of 1987 10 U.S.C. Section 1207, Public Law 99-661 (1986), Section 1207 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 1987). Congress revisited efforts to enhance DoD engagement with HBCUs 2010 and 2016. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2010, 10 USC 2362, directed the DoD to “carry out a program to provide assistance to HBCUs to assist the Department in each federal agency related research, development, testing, and evaluation activities.” (National defense Authorization Act of 2010, Section 2362, Public Law 101-182).

1 See Appendix A for a Mr. Rosenthall’s biosketch.
Unlike the 1987 NDAA, the 2010 NDAA listed “other institutions of higher education” as entities that the DoD should establish partnerships with HBCU/MIIs to strengthen their capacity to conduct research and perform contracts to support national security interests. (10 USC 2362). Similarly, Section 233 of the NDAA of 2016 required the DOD to develop a strategy to enhance its engagements HBCUs and other MIs.\(^2\) (National defense Authorization Act of 2016, Section 233, Public Law 114-92 (2015). Despite the ongoing attention to this issue by Congress, in this author’s opinion, the DoD has not employed all authority granted by Congress to better engage HBCUs in the research, development, testing and evaluation activities to support national defense. One example of authority unused in the ability to provide priority of funding to institutions that have not received a substantial amount of DoD funding.

Still, there are several federally-funded HBCUs/MIIs-focused programs that should be acknowledged. Described below are select examples of DoD and other federal agency activities designed to increase engagement and partnerships with HBCUs/MIIs. Also discussed below are identified challenges that HBCUs/MIIs face in increasing capacity and developing stakeholder collaborations, as well as select best practices that may improve outcomes for these institutions.

**OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL HBCU/MSI ACTIVITIES**

Over the past two decades and in response to Congressional mandates, the DoD has established several HBCUs/MIIs-related programs. Select activities are discussed below.\(^3\)

**DOD HBCU/MI Capacity-Building Activities**

**HBCU/MSI Science Program.** The DoD’s Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD R&E)’s HBCUs and other MSIs Science program is a key component of the Department’s engagement with HBCUs/MSIs. The program is designed in increase research and educational capacity at HBCUs/MSIs. The purpose of the HBCU/MSI

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\(^2\) Another element of 10 USC 2362 excluded from the DoD strategy is *Priority for Funding*. Section 2362 states “the Secretary of Defense may establish procedures under which the Secretary may give priority in providing funding under this section to institutions that have not otherwise received a significant amount of funding from the Department of Defense for research, development, testing, and evaluation programs supporting the national security functions of the Department.” (DOD NDAA 233 Strategy) Even though the DoD has the authority to implement a *Priority of Funding* initiative for HBCU/MSIs, DoD has not yet developed such a program. (Testimony of Evelyn Kent before the National Academies Study group on June 15, 2021)

\(^3\) See DoD online resources for additional programs of interest.
Science Program is to 1) increase the research and educational capacity of HBCUs/MSIs, and 2) to foster workforce diversity and entry of underrepresented minorities into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines important to national defense. This program is coordinated with the Service research offices, and partners with DoD laboratories for the Centers of Excellence. *(Citation: See Undersecretary of Defense for Research and engineering (2021) retrieved from Basic Research | Research Directorate > Programs > HBCU/MI Program (defense.gov)).* This program enhances HBCU research and education capabilities by providing funds to conduct research in national security interest, allowing institutions to upgrade their lab instrumentations, and devoting additional institution research time to preparing students for critical skill positions in national defense areas of employment. Additional data is required to conclude that the program has made significant increases in HBCU competitiveness in open research and contract opportunities.

**Taking the Pentagon to the People.** The Taking the Pentagon to the People program is an outreach effort designed to promote employment opportunities at the DoD to underrepresented communities. Managed through the DoD’s Diversity Management Operations Center (DMOC), the program calls for expanded public and community outreach efforts through internships, contracts, grants, scholarships, and research and development programs. The program, which has offered more than 20 workshops since 2014, promotes an increasingly significant presence of minorities and minority institutions in the STEM pipeline, return-on-investment programs, and DoD workforce development initiative. The Department sustains continuing goals of exposing minority institutions, their faculty, staff, administrators and students to business and career opportunities within DoD. We envision participation from DoD leaders and program managers, prime and small business contractors, administrators, faculty and students from HBCU/MI, including Tribal Colleges and Universities, Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions and community colleges. We look forward to your support in furthering the mission of our nation’s minority institutions, while exposing DoD as an employer of choice *(Citation: DOD Pentagon to the People (2014takingthepentagontothepeople.com)).*

**Technical Assistance Workshops.** The OUSD(R&E) offers technical assistance workshops as part of a series of training and educational activities intended to provide program, process, and funding opportunity information to MSIs. The workshops focus on DoD funding
opportunities and best practices in writing effective technical proposals. Representatives from the OSD, Army, Navy, Air Force, and other federal agencies, present funding opportunities and share insights on writing competitive proposals. (OUSD(R&E) website).

Centers of Excellence. The DoD HBCU/MI Program established nine Centers of Excellence (COE). The COEs for autonomy, cyber security, and research data analytics were awarded in 2015 and are now in the fifth year of a five-year program. The COE for STEM Scholars was awarded in December 2017 and is funded at $1 million per year for four years. The Minority Women in STEM COE was awarded in July 2019 and is funded at $2 million with a four-year performance period. The 2020 established centers will conduct cutting-edge research in defense priority areas over a five-year period centering on artificial intelligence and machine learning, aerospace, quantum sensing, and fully networked command control, and communications.

DoD Mentor/Protégé Program. Established in 1990, the program provides incentives to major DoD contractors to furnish disadvantaged small business concerns with assistance designed to enhance their capabilities to perform as subcontractors and viable suppliers under DoD Contracts and other Federal Government and commercial contracts. (Mentor-Protégé Program (defense.gov)). HBCUs have been added to mentor teams and to provide training and other assistance to protégés. (Mentor-Protégé Program Policy and Procedures Manual FY 2016.pdf (army.mil)). The DoD scorecard does not include performance goals and outcomes for HBCUs.

Targeted Funding for HBCUs/MSIs. In addition to the DoD programs described above, Congress provides a specified amount of targeted funding to support education, research, and equipment programs for HBCU/MSIs. The amount for FY2021 is $80,000,000 and is to be awarded to HBCU/MSIs through a competitive process. Some of these funds are dispersed across DoD service branches (Air Force, Navy, Army) and DoD agencies (DARPA, DTRA) to be used to support a range of investments in HBCUs/MSIs, including through fellowships,

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4 North Carolina A&T State University (Autonomy); Norfolk State University (Cyber Security); Prairie View A&M University (Research Data Analytics); Hampton University (STEM Scholars); Spelman College (Minority Women in STEM); Howard University (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning); Tuskegee University (Aerospace Education, Research, and Innovation Center); Delaware State University (Advanced Quantum Sensing); University of California, Riverside (Networked Configurable Command, Control, and Communications for Rapid Situational Awareness).
research support, and equipment grants. Based the author’s research, the total DoD financial investments and allocations in HBCU/MSIs is difficult to obtain using current and publicly available databases. As the amount of funds allocated by Congress for HBCUs and MSIs increases, there are additional opportunities for HBCUs and MSIs to conduct research and provide national defense related education to a diverse student body and prepare them for work in national defense areas.

**DOD HBCU/MI Capacity-Building Activities: Metrics and Outcomes**

There are several metrics that could be employed to determine the outcomes and success of DoD sponsored HBCU/MSI capacity building programs. The author has reached out to DoD program managers at three programs, including Pentagon for the People, the DoD Mentor/Protégé Program, and the Army Research Office’s Technical Assistance Workshops, to determine how they measure success in their particular programs. More specifically, a request was made to review data in the categories below:

- White papers presented
- Proposals submitted
- Grants and contracts awarded

For the above three programs, metrics were not readily available for share, and the only program metrics made available were the number of program participants across funding periods. Looking ahead, as the DoD continues to encourage and activities to increase HBCU/MSI research capacity and funding success, additional programmatic metrics should be measured and reported, programs should be evaluated for their success in increasing HBCU/MSI research and contract awards, and successful completions should be tracked. Additional metrics and outcomes may include:

- A. Number of Effective Partnerships
- B. Number of White Papers Presented to DoD
- C. Number of Proposals Presented to DoD
- D. Number of DoD research and contract Awards to HBCU/MSIs
Other Federal HBCU/MI Activities

Other federal agencies have also developed programs with the goal of increasing research capacity, investment, and infrastructure at HBCUs/MIs, including several described below.

National Institutes of Health: Launched in response to Executive Order (EO) 13779:
The White House Initiative to Promote Excellence and Innovation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (2017), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Path to Excellence and Innovation for HBCUs (PIE) is a program designed to enhance NIH engagements with HBCUs. The mission of the PEI Initiative is to empower HBCUs with the knowledge, resources, and skills they need to effectively and consistently compete for and win contracts from the NIH. The program currently includes 21 HBCUs and 42 businesses for the 2021 cohort (Citation: Paving the Path to Excellence in Innovation for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, PowerPoint Presentation (nih.gov) (2021))

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

• National Institutes of Health’s Innovative Programs to Enhance Research Training (IPERT).”The IPERT program supports creative and innovative research educational activities designed to complement and/or enhance the training of a workforce to meet the nation’s biomedical research needs.”

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

• NASA’s Minority University Research and Education Project. “Through MUREP activities, NASA supports Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPI), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU), and other minority serving institutions, through multi-year research grants. Additionally, MUREP provides internships, scholarships, fellowships, mentoring, and tutoring for underserved and underrepresented learners in K-12, informal, and higher education
settings.”

- **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (University Leadership Initiative).**
  “ULI was created to initiate a new type of interaction between NASA Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate (ARMD) and the U.S. university community, where American universities take the lead, build their own teams, and set their own research paths. This initiative seeks new, innovative ideas that can support the NASA ARMD portfolio and the U.S. aviation community. Strategic goals include: Provide broad opportunities for students at different levels, including graduate and undergraduate, to participate in aeronautics research and Promote greater diversity in aeronautics through increased participation of minority-serving institutions and underrepresented university faculties in ULI activities.”

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

- **Department of Energy’s Minority Serving Institution Partnership Program (MSIPP).** “The MSIPP is designed to build a sustainable pipeline between the Department of Energy's (DOE) sites/labs and minority-serving institutions in STEM disciplines, and bring a heightened awareness of NNSA plants and laboratories to institutions with a common interest in STEM research fields. Currently, MSIPP supports 17 consortium-based teams consisting of participants from select institutions.”

- **Department of Energy (Massie Chairs of Excellence):** The US Department of Energy created the Dr. Samuel P. Massie Chairs of Excellence in 1994, which provide African American students with an opportunity to pursue research in environmental studies. In 1998, Dr. Massie was named one of the 75 most distinguished chemists of the 20th century. He was one of the three African Americans honored with this distinction.

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

- **National Science Foundation.** *Centers of Research Excellence in Science and
Technology (CREST) and HBCU Research Infrastructure for Science and Engineering (HBCU-RISE): “The Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST) program provides support to enhance the research capabilities of minority-serving institutions (MSI) through the establishment of centers that effectively integrate education and research. MSIs of higher education denote institutions that have undergraduate enrollments of 50% or more (based on total student enrollment) of members of minority groups underrepresented among those holding advanced degrees in science and engineering fields: African Americans, Alaska Natives, American Indians, Hispanic Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Native Pacific Islanders. CREST promotes the development of new knowledge, enhancements of the research productivity of individual faculty, and an expanded presence of students historically underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. CREST Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (PRF) awards provide research experience and training for early career scientists at active CREST Centers. HBCU-RISE awards specifically target HBCUs to support the expansion of institutional research capacity as well as the production of doctoral students, especially those from groups underrepresented in STEM, at those institutions.”

Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP).
“HBCU-UP provides awards to strengthen STEM undergraduate education and research at HBCUs. Support is available through the following tracks: Broadening Participation Research (BPR) in STEM Education projects, which provide support for research that seeks to create and study new theory-driven models and innovations related to the participation and success of underrepresented groups in STEM undergraduate education; Research Initiation Awards (RIA), which provide support for STEM faculty with no prior or recent research funding to pursue research at the home institution, a NSF-funded research center, a research intensive institution, or a national laboratory; Broadening Participation Research Centers (BPRC), which provide support to conduct broadening participation research at institutions that have held three rounds of Implementation or ACE Implementation Projects and with demonstrated capability to conduct broadening participation research.”
- **Small Business Administration (Mentor Protégé Program)**: Program designed to help eligible small businesses (protégés) gain capacity and win government contracts through partnerships with more experienced companies (mentors).

**KEY CHALLENGES FOR HBCUS/MSIS IN EXPANDING FUNDING, INFRASTRUCTURE, PARTNERSHIPS, AND CAPACITY**

Despite the current efforts by DoD and other federal agencies to engage and support HBCUs/MIs, these institutions face a number of foundational and institutional challenges, including related to funding, infrastructure, capacity, that serve as barriers to advancing their work, including developing collaborations. Examples of challenges, as described in a 2021 NIH white paper, *Paving the Path to Excellence and Innovation for Historically Black Colleges and Universities a White Paper from the National Institutes of Health*, are described below.

Securing government funding, which can be a complex and protracted process, is particularly challenging for HBCUs/MIs. While HBCU/MIs are also renowned for their research and educational programs, they often lack the business experience required to fundraise successfully.

Most HBCUs/MIs also lack a dedicated acquisition resource. In many cases, it is up to the research faculty to manage the procurement process on their own, which is challenge given competing priorities and limited time and resources. Typically, these institutions are not trained on how the process works. As a result, many opportunities to collaborate are missed or are stalled (*Citation: Paving the Path to Excellence and Innovation for Historically Black Colleges and Universities a White Paper from the National Institutes of Health* [PowerPoint Presentation](nih.gov) (2021))

Additionally, faculty salaries at HBCUs are also at least 20 percent lower than other institutions (*Clay, HBCUs facing the future, Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Facing the Future - Kresge Foundation* (2012)). HBCU faculty members teach more classes, and expectations
for faculty engagement on campus have increased, making it more challenging to focus on
writing proposals or developing collaborations. This difficulty is expected to increase in the
coming years as retirements erode the committed core of senior scholars. (*CITATION: Clay,
_HBCUs facing the future_, **Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Facing the Future - Kresge
Foundation* (2012))

These funding challenges faced by HBCU/MSIs are well recognized as major barriers
that have grown out of inequitable practices in federal and state funding and the inability to
compete with larger and more well-resourced Primarily White Institutions (PWIs). (*CITATION:
at HBCUs. New Brunswick, NJ: Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Leadership, Equity, &
Justice.*) As Gasman (2014) notes, HBCUs have struggled with the procurement of both private
and public grants due to a lack of infrastructure, including in the grant writing and grant
management area. In fact, in some cases, HBCUs have not applied for federal grants even when
there are earmarks for these institutions — due to a lack of awareness about the opportunity or
limited grants support (*CITATION: Gasman, _A need for strategy and investment in HBCUs | TheHill_
(2014))

**HBCU/MSI BEST PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES**

Despite these significant challenges, it is this author’s position from ## years of
experience in the field of HBCU/MI collaborations, that there are select best practices that could
yield positive outcomes for HBCU/MIs. These current best practices include:

**Partnerships with Industry, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers
(FFRDCs), University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), and Other PWIs.** The most
effective and efficient way to enhance HBCU/MI engagements and strengthen their capacity to
compete for DoD funded opportunities is by forming and managing partnerships with entities
that conduct a substantial among of DoD research and contracts. Since many HBCU/MSIs have
limited success forming substantively mutually beneficial partnerships with these entities, there
is a prime opportunity for DoD to make these partnerships a priority, provide incentives for their
success, and hold all parties accountable for the partnerships reaching their stated objective.
A Clear Understanding of the Academic R&D Enterprise and Its Potential for Institutions, including Entrepreneurship Activities. Based on my expertise, there is a need for greater understanding in various HBCU/MSIs of how the academic research and development enterprise has elevated institutions of higher learning, and how it can grow the institution, and provide additional STEM-focused opportunities, include entrepreneurship activities, for both faculty and students.

At most HBCU/MIs, faculty are not entrepreneurial, and have neither experience nor interest in business development activities. This coupled with what has traditionally been the lack of adequate resources to participate in professional meetings, many faculty members have been limited to responding to requests for proposals, without any relationship with program managers to obtain a better understanding of the agency’s goals and challenges. Based on my experience, additional investments and support in building entrepreneurial capacity would be beneficial to many HBCU/MIs. Additionally, continued investments and engagements between the DoD, DoD partners, and the HBCU/MI community would be beneficial to all parties.

Current and High-level Knowledge and Understanding of DoD Culture, Research Priorities, Issues and Challenges. Many HBCU/MSIs lack knowledge of the challenges DoD and the military face as well as an understanding of DoD processes. Without an understanding of the agency’s mission and challenges, and funding structures and processes, it is difficult to present workable and fundable solutions.

Strengthening HBCU Research and Contract Infrastructure. Many HBCU/MSIs have struggled with grant and contract pursuit and acquisition due to a lack of or inadequate support. Increased investments in their grants and contracts management area could provide the necessary ingredients for greater research and contracts success and relieve the burden of faculty members with heavy teaching loads. In addition, one of the most frequently mentioned challenges to HBCU/MSI participation in federal grants and contracts is the lack of adequate support from their sponsored programs office. Some institutions have limited sponsored programs offices, and some have none. Innovative approaches to expanding or sharing sponsored programs offices would help to address this challenge for most, if not all institutions.
EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WITH HBCUs/MSIs

As noted in the examples above, establishing and expanding partnerships and collaborations with HBCUs/MIs is critical to strengthening engagement with DoD and other federal partners, and to expand their research capabilities and infrastructure. Intermediaries such as Tougaloo College Research and Development Foundation (TCRDF) work to broker strategic partnerships to support the missions of Tougaloo College and other HBCUs. For example, TCRDF has worked to form a partnership between Tougaloo College and Mississippi State University (MSU) to collaborate on the development and drafting of research proposals. MSU has also agreed to serve as a mentor to Tougaloo College and other HBCUs, offering technical assistance and, where possible, expertise to build and enhance capabilities.

Industry partnerships are also important for building institutional capacity. As one TCRDF-brokered example of success, Deloitte has signed a partnership agreement to support Tougaloo College’s Cybersecurity Initiative, and provides collaborative opportunities to work together on on research proposals and other activities.

TCRDF has also signed a contract with Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) to form and manage GTRI/HBCU agreements to conduct work on a $2.5 billion Army contract. This contract was negotiated under a key TCRDF collaborative initiative called the HBCU/MSI/University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) Initiative. This initiative (launched in XXXX) is an effort to establish and manage partnerships between HBCU, Minority Serving Institutions, and UARCs or DoD research centers aligned with a university.

To date, there are two formal HBCU/MSI- UARC partnership opportunities that are still under development. Although there are no public evaluations or metrics of success to share, I describe these partnerships below in an attempt to illustrate their potential for mutual benefit between research partners.

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5 Over the past three years, TCRDF has secured $2.25 million in funding for Tougaloo College, including from the Department of Energy, Minority Business Development Agency, and US Army, among others (Citation). Add here: online reference to TCRDF’s mission and full list of initiatives.

6 reference.
HBCU/UARC Partnerships

The DoD has indicated a strong interest in expanding UARCs/HBCU partnerships. Two examples of current UARC/HBCU partnerships are described below, including the Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security (ARLIS) at the University of Maryland and the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), are discussed below.

ARLIS’s core mission is to support the government’s security and intelligence communities. It aims to integrate social and behavioral sciences, AI and computing for a new Human Domain applied research and development capabilities. ARLIS aims to establish foundational partnerships with USG entities that leverage our core competencies and advance RDT&E activities in areas of critical need. ARLIS focuses on applied and translational research for the DoD and IC and provides trusted support to USG program managers and agencies across these communities in areas of national need. In 2020, ARLIS created the Intelligence and Security University Research Enterprise (INSURE), an academic research consortium to further its mission as a UARC supporting the Defense Security Enterprise (DSE) and the IC. Consortium partners are selected based on symbiotic institutional strengths, with a track record of conducting applied, quick-turn, mission-relevant R&D, and offering unique capabilities for training the current workforce and growing the workforce of the future. Initial consortium members include George Mason University, Howard University, Morgan State University, Texas A&M University, University of the District of Columbia, and the University of Wisconsin in Madison. (HOME | UMD ARLIS Website (2021))

GTRI develops advanced technology solutions and large-scale system prototypes to address national security, economic development, and other key challenges. Founded in 1934 as the Engineering Experiment Station, GTRI has grown to more than 2,700 employees supporting eight laboratories in over 20 locations around the country and performs more than $660 million of problem-solving research annually for government and industry. GTRI’s core competencies...

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7 Information for this section for ARLIS was gleaned from the ARLIS site (HOME | UMD ARLIS Website) and conversations with the ARLIS executive Director.
8 Information for GTRI is based on the author’s work in proposing and managing the GTRI/TCRDF partnership.
include basic and applied research, human systems integration, development and prototyping of high-performance computing architecture and optimization tools for complex system modeling, simulation and performance analysis, basic and applied research in aerodynamics and flow control, aeroacoustics and computational aeroelasticity. (Home | GTRI (gatech.edu) (2021)) One important aspect of the GTRI HBCU/MSI research partnership is the supporting sponsor. The sponsor tasks and provides GTRI with support to identify HBCU/MSI research partners. This is one of TCRDF’s role in the GTRI/TCRDF partnership along with serving as an honest broker between GTRI and their HBCU/MSI research partners. This, along with frequent feedback sessions that include GTRI, TCRDF, and the funding sponsor, increases the probability of success finding and supporting HBCU/MSI research partners.

**AUTHOR'S OVERALL REFLECTIONS ON COMMISSIONED TOPIC**

Congress has consistently displayed an interest in the DOD enhancing engagements with HBCU/MSIs. Since 1987, Congress has stated that intent and has provided authority for the DoD to increase research and contract awards to HBCU/MSIs. However, the DoD has yet to utilize the granted authority to its fullest capacity. The author notes that arguably one of the most effective and efficient means to increasing HBCU/MSI capacity to support national defense interests through research grants and contract awards is by forming and managing research and contract partnerships between HBCU/MSIs and entities that receive substantial research and contract awards from the DoD. This includes, but is not limited to, University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), Federally Funded research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), Federal Contractors, and predominately White Institutions the receive substantial amounts of Defense funding. Congress has consistently made that suggestion to the DoD but has not made that a requirement. It is critical that DoD forms and manages new partnerships with HBCU/MSIs and is provided with the required incentives and resources to ensure that the agency can establish meaningful engagement with these institutions.
John Rosenthal, President, Tougaloo College Research and Development Foundation.

The Tougaloo College Research and Development Foundation’s purpose is to support the development mission of Tougaloo College and other HBCUs. The Foundation fulfills its mission by helping institutions secure and execute federal and private sector grants and contracts, and by facilitating partnerships with the private sector. The Foundation also supports government relations efforts in Congress and federal agencies. Rosenthal, a U.S. Army veteran, graduated from Tougaloo College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and from George Washington University with a Juris Doctorate degree. Most of his career has been dedicated to working with or for HBCUs or a consortium of HBCUs. He has served as Director of the Urban Environment Institute at Howard University, Vice President for Research, Economic Development and Public Service, and Executive Director of 1890 Program at South Carolina State University, and Vice President for Research, Advancement and Economic Development at Grambling State University.