

# A Trip Back in Time to Black America's Antebellum Colleges

*"There is no achievement which  
is possible to human beings which  
is not possible to Africans.  
You are an African.  
Your studies of logic should  
Lead to the correct conclusion.  
Therefore, go forth, thou  
Sons of Africa, and return  
Home laden with the  
Golden Fleece."*

—Nnandi Azikiwe

When Nnandi Azikiwe—first president of Nigeria and a graduate of Lincoln University—wrote these words, he was, perhaps, speaking to his fellow African students. But we can take them to heart, you and me, because we, too, are sons and daughters of Africa. Black colleges and universities have played a singularly significant role in molding Black leaders and other major achievers in this nation and in many other parts of the world. We invite you to visit these and other Black colleges to imbibe the rich wine of Black heritage that flows freely within their hallowed halls where it is carefully guarded and preserved.

## Black Desire For Education

**O**NE of the most enduring, and least disputed, characteristics of Afro-Americans has been their desire for education. The very qualities of durability and persistence over a long period of time, despite formidable obstacles and exceptional demands, mark this passion for knowledge as one of the most cherished values of the Black community.

The real story of Black yearning for education lies with those who, during



the period of enslavement, persevered in the attempt to "snatch furtive bits of knowledge" when the ignorance of Black people (slave and free) was considered essential for the survival of the slavocracy. That the numbers were relatively small should in no way detract from the exceptional nature of the undertaking.

The tenacity of a people, who held on to the idea that education had a priceless value, must not only be admired but remembered. An unwavering belief in the redemptive and liberating power of knowledge was the legacy of our slave ancestors. Let us claim that legacy by visiting and otherwise supporting our historically Black colleges and universities.

## Lincoln University (Pennsylvania)

**L**INCOLN UNIVERSITY is the oldest college in the United States having as its original purpose the higher education of Black youth. Since 1857, it has provided a superior liberal arts education to students "of every clime and complexion." Moreover, few universities of its size in this country enroll as large a percentage of students from other countries.

Lincoln University is proud of its historic function of affording higher educational opportunities to students who have a reasonable chance of success. The university endeavors especially to provide suitable and high quality educational opportunities for all qualified applicants in its role as an effective member of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education of Pennsylvania.

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## "Pulling Ourselves Up By Our Own Bootstraps"...A Series