

QUANTIFIABLE DIVERSITY IN THE ARTS: HOW HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES (HBCU) CAN INCREASE DIVERSITY IN ARTS ADMINISTRATION

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Major paper submitted to the faculty of Goucher College in partial  
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## Abstract

**Title of Thesis:** QUANTIFIABLE DIVERSITY IN THE ARTS: HOW HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HBCU) CAN INCREASE DIVERSITY IN ARTS ADMINISTRATION

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To elevate the diversity dialogue among students, the arts community, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), with the intent purpose to combat rhetoric that prolongs, or even proliferates the diversity gap, this paper explores what preemptive role HBCUs might play in proactively addressing the need to create a diverse pipeline to the field of arts administration. Through academic preparation, HBCUs can ensure African-American candidates acquire proficiencies to enter and make measurable gains in arts administration.

The first argument asserts that arts organizations continue to postulate that the lack of African-American candidates in professional and leadership roles is inextricably related to the insufficient number of qualified and capable African-American candidates from which to recruit. The second argument asserts that arts organizations that have adopted

satisfactory recruitment efforts, practices, and policies that value diversity yet remains homogenous reinforce assumptions that emerging African-American arts administrators are in short supply, lack interest in the field, or have inadequate formal arts education or experience.

The third argument asserts that HBCUs, while limited in financial and physical resources, graduate an equal or greater amount of African-American students than predominantly white institutions (PWI). This implies that accompanying factors unique to the HBCU, such as early development of faculty and student relationships, alumni networks, extended family environment, and relevance to the African-American experience, are key to academic, social, and professional development. These findings suggest that unless reversed, the education gap will directly attribute to a greater underrepresentation of African-Americans in arts administration.

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This paper is dedicated to the memory of my parents, Bartow Ward Wooden, Jr. and Essie Mae Wooden, both Howard University alumni. Thank you for your unconditional love, support, and strength.

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## INTRODUCTION

In 2000, minorities comprised approximately 30% of the population of the United States, according to the US Census Bureau. By 2050, the minority population is projected to represent approximately 50% of the total US population, meaning ethnically and racially diverse people may no longer be a numerical minority (United States Census Bureau).

While the general consensus is that the arts and cultural sector embraces diversity, there remains a distinct imbalance in the representative contribution of African-Americans in professional and volunteer leadership roles. The pipeline that prohibits African-Americans from accessing, engaging, and developing in the arts administration field is evident. As the field of arts administration becomes more specialized and, therefore, even more competitive, arts organizations increasingly look to graduate programs to recruit their brightest candidates (Cuyler, "The Career Paths 20). Demographic pipelines in a typical arts organization mirror the traditional performing and visual arts audience. That is, arts organizations have historically done very well recruiting and attracting talented, heterosexual, upper middle class, white females (Stein 304). There is a shortage of networks and structured opportunities systematically working to address this disparity, yet a holistic approach with buy-in from arts organizations, arts administrators, arts educators, and HBCUs would yield a greater impact on preparing African-Americans to enter the nonprofit arts industry sufficiently prepared.

Although HBCUs nationally account for only 3% of higher education institutions, they successfully graduate approximately 20% of African-American students (Jewell and Allen 257).

HBCUs play a significant role in advancing the education of African-Americans, both historically and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 2011, one fourth of bachelor's degrees in education were awarded to African-Americans attending HBCUs (National Center for Education Statistics). Furthermore, HBCUs lead in conferring baccalaureate degrees to African-Americans in engineering, math, life, and physical sciences (Evans, Evans, and Evans 8). Three-fourths of all HBCUs are directly responsible for producing more than 80% of African-American degrees in medicine, primarily awarded by Howard University and Meharry Medical College. More than 50% of African-Americans that now serve in traditionally white, research universities received their bachelor's degree from an HBCU (Bolden et al.). Serving as exemplars for educating first-generation, low-income, African-American students, HBCUs are the greatest proponent for preparing graduates to enter the workforce. Over 25% of HBCUs have open admission policies in place, in comparison to Primarily White Institutions (PWIs) at 14%. Approximately 70% of undergraduate HBCU students are eligible to receive Pell grant funding (NCES). For this reason, HBCUs serve as a pipeline to higher education for less academically prepared, although talented and capable, African-American high school students (Bonaparte, Lim, and Okoro 107). HBCUs are vital institutions, not only for the African-American community, but also for the entire national education system.

Despite the obvious benefits of diversity, relatively few arts organizations can produce quantitative historical evidence to confirm that diversity is a core value. If arts organizations cannot connect their diversity message to a pathway to diversity, with measurable increases over time, not only do they fail to uphold their diversity mission but also ultimately fail to reach their diversity goals. To that extent, organizations substantiate negative perceptions about how they value African-American perspectives and contributions within the workplace. The disconnect

occurs between value and action. Arts organizations would benefit from using data to quantify both their services and their organizational performance (Rushton, “A Note on the Use and Misuse” 452). Without systematic, forward-moving, quantifiable action, arts organizations, regardless of their size, continue to remain static. This research petitions higher education institutions, arts educators, producers, presenters, funders, and HBCUs to assemble nationally in applying research-based interventions to adopt standards for measuring diversity, or at a minimum, to design a framework toward guiding the conversation. There are two primary reasons that would call for HBCUs to turn their attention to contributing to the field of arts administration. The first is cultural sustainability (Hale 48). HBCUs were formed with the intent to foster preservation and self-authorship to a population that was denied access to higher education (Davis 149). Historically HBCUs have successfully created an environment where African-American cultural experiences could be shared, validated and preserved. Critical to academic achievement, the HBCU is a stabilizer promoting a positive African-American college experience as evidenced by the increased academic achievement, and frequency of degree completion in comparison to PWI (Cokley 288). The second reason HBCUs are positioned to contribute to the field of arts administration is by creating a pathway for African-American business students to envision the arts and cultural sector as a viable profession (Bowman 234). The HBCU as a forerunner in higher education for African-Americans has consistently proven its success in preparing African-American students to enter professional and business industries (Jewell and Allen 246). With the same regard, HBCUs should turn their attention to the sustainability of the arts for both cultural and non-culturally specific arts organizations. Setting a precedent for increasing the number of arts administrators to enter and advance in the field, HBCUs can produce a corps of emerging 21<sup>st</sup> century arts leaders to address the unique needs of

cultural arts organizations that widely operate under both limited budgets and physical space. To that end, reinforcing its commitment to inclusivity, HBCUs become change agents not only for sustaining cultural heritage within the African-American community, but also in changing the face of leadership across the entire cultural sector (Abelman and Dalessandro 106).

Changing demographics have a direct impact on the creative economy, as well as the national and global economy as a whole (Box, Converso, and Osayamwen 23). HBCUs consistently foster an ethnically diverse student body with cross-cultural engagement from regions such as the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean. Graduates of HBCUs are fully prepared to compete and lead in the global market. Racial and socioeconomic diversity on HBCU campuses reflect similarities to international cultural communities, that is, non-white, with a history of institutional and social oppressed people groups (Harper, Patton, and Wooden 106). Employers in both for profit and nonprofit sectors are seeking employees who are prepared to engage with all facets of the global workforce (Casner-Lotto and Barrington 48). Higher education holds the responsibility to prepare students to enter the workforce with both business and cross-cultural competencies including but not limited to writing, budgeting, communication and leadership (Martin 3). This new core of leadership can help to ensure the sustainability of African-American contributions to the field and across the arts and cultural sector. Therefore, HBCUs that continue to seek innovative ways that African-American students can engage with the international community do so with the purposeful intent of creating an interconnected educational and professional network of global leaders, who work, live and impact cultures that are distinctly different from their own.

International partnerships can exist in various ways. One way HBCUs can take a bold international approach is to establish reciprocal partnerships with countries representative of the

HBCU student body such as Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. HBCUs can produce global citizens whose learning experiences are encompassed by shared international research, language exchange programs, and diverse worldviews. Building upon its commitment to foster an ethnically diverse student and faculty body, HBCUs can strengthen their focus on arts administration in order to attract even more students from the global community (Davis 144). To that extent, should HBCUs create a strong response to the facilitation and preparation of 21st century global leaders for the arts and culture sector, then both African-American students as well as students from diverse cultural backgrounds would begin to look to HBCUs as a leading contender for international arts training (Dewey, "Training Arts Administrators" 5).

HBCUs can acknowledge and accept their role and accountability for both introducing and preparing African-American students to the field of arts administration. When HBCUs embrace this role, education and diversity gaps within the cultural sector can be reduced. By working in partnership to increase their involvement in the field, both the HBCU and arts and culture sector can minimize or eliminate obstacles that impede African-Americans to access and advance in the arts administration field (Hale 55). To that end, both the institution and arts and culture sector should closely examine any existing pipelines as a starting point for gaining preliminary insight to developing an adaptable measurement for diversity.

The framework for designing the metric might include an initial investigation of exploratory questions to determine what existing knowledge students have. How do students at HBCUs perceive arts administration? How many students are pursuing arts administration currently? Can students identify arts administrators currently working in the field? Once this framework is designed, and further dialogue with both the cultural sector and the HBCU is solicited then stakeholders will be able to create the course of study within the HBCU system

that can lead to the development of this pipeline. Building a quantifiable system will only be as strong as the integrity of the questions, which stakeholders are seeking to measure with the HBCU as an anchoring tool in building a quantifying process. Additionally, other questions must be addressed, including but not limited to the following: What understanding do students have of cultural policy? What are university students' understanding of stewardship and accountability? Do the career trajectories of HBCU students seeking to enter the arts include arts administration? What real or perceived barriers higher education students, faculty, or career advisors face when seeking to expand their prospective roles in arts administration? These are a few types of questions that can be used to design a framework to track students over their course of study.

To counter the systemic lack of diversity within the field of arts administration, HBCUs can catalyze a consistent, meaningful, and replicable approach to increasing the representation of African-Americans by elevating the diversity dialogue among students, faculty, and career advisors. HBCUs can become the center of cultural exchange with the aim to pursue tangible results in mobilizing internal and external higher education solutions to the diversity issue (Cuyler, "Affirmative Action" 98). This research seeks to inform the work of students, faculty, and career advisors.

## Chapter I QUANTIFYING DIVERSITY

Arts literature is replete with the benefits of diversity. Nevertheless, there is insufficient research impelling a standardized approach to collecting, analyzing, aggregating, and publishing diversity data to various stakeholder groups. Some may believe diversity cannot be measured quantitatively. Indeed, if there are no feasible metrics in place to do so, measuring diversity can be a complex challenge (Rushton, “Problems with Data”).

To begin the process, arts organizations can develop a written diversity statement to express their core diversity values at each level of the organization. This starting point would serve as a broad measurement, a code of conduct or standard expressing organizational values. In addition, organizations may examine what indicators must be in place in order to determine if they are successfully achieving their diversity goals. We can agree that arts organizations are more apt to use quantitative data to measure audience participation, ticket sales, or number of students served. Outcomes are often stated in terms of anecdotal programmatic data with outputs generally reserved for the number of patrons or users served through an arts program. Arts organizations would benefit from using data to quantify both their services and their organizational performance.

Decision making within every level, department, or team can be supported by statistical evidence. Developing metrics to track diversity begins with aligning these metrics with the organization’s core values and goals. Diversity goals are contextual and varied for each organization. Organizations can develop the benchmark for and by which it measures diversity

against itself, the community, city/county, state, or national demographic. Once determined, the organization has a fixed value by which it can measure its efforts, organizational goals, strategies, and tactics against its stated values and goals. In order to assess progress, organizations must use data and be transparent.

### Metrics, Indicators, and Benchmarks

Arts organizations can use data sets to systematically collect, analyze, and report diversity pipeline issues (Hubbard 132). Utilizing metrics will allow arts organizations to gauge how well they are meeting their intended goal. Data collection forms the basis by which information is gathered and monitored. In the same vein, as a red light indicates stop and a green light indicates go, indicators provides a means by which organizations can observe change. Whether measuring staff relations or productivity, in order to quantify the impact of a diversity initiative, arts organizations must keep score. A balanced diversity scorecard levels the playing field (Hubbard 121). As suppliers of goods and services, arts organizations must record, track, and measure diversity deliverables against standardized metrics to reach diversity goals.

### Diversity Goals

If an arts organization has a diversity goal of attracting twenty African-American candidates, then there is little need for an indicator beyond counting twenty individuals. However, if the same organization seeks to identify the level of trust between African-American entry-level employees and their managers, one indicator could be the level of engagement that managers demonstrate with white employees compared to African-American employees. If African-American employees observe that their white colleagues have the benefit of more one-on-one time with the manager, consistent analytical and anecdotal feedback from the managers

on work performance, or extended opportunities to take on greater responsibilities, then those African-American employees can perceive inequality, lack of trust, or a combination of both between manager and staff. Such indicators—the number of face-to-face meetings with the manager, amount of feedback from the manager, and the increase in the number of more challenging responsibilities—can all be quantified. Through this type of investigation, organizations may find that there is a measurable connection between employee performance and diversity.

Of course, some sectors of business or work responsibilities, such as ticket sales, event revenue, and number of students served, are more adaptable to quantifying than others. Nevertheless, it is possible, though not simplistic, for organizations to rate key diversity goals and assign a numerical weight to each indicator. The process would become more streamlined as more arts organizations begin the process and share the results of their provisional assessments with one another.

Beyond a numerical value, percentage, or data set, quantifiable increase forms the basis by which potential and output can be accurately projected and realized. If this is true, then the same can be said of the inverse of this statement, that the lack of quantifiable increase can indicate what will happen if arts organizations continue to do nothing. We can value diversity and still remain apathetic to change. Arts organizations that value diversity, yet have little to no representation of African-Americans on staff and in leadership roles, send the message that diversity exists within their organizations in pretense only.

### Existing Methodologies

Some efforts to increase diversity in arts administration may have resulted in improved awareness. However, the nonprofit arts field has not established research informed by

standardized benchmarks using aggregate data quantifiably to increase diversity (Lord, “Quantifying Diversity”). More often, arts organizations see diversification as a means to survival. That is, they expand programming to include diverse works in order to attract or increase the representation of African-American audiences as a means to resuscitate shortfalls in net revenue. From this narrow perspective, diversity goals then become self-serving. Diversity, in and of itself, becomes a “commodity” to be traded as “futures contracts” where one party delivers the commodity and the other party acts as purchaser with the expectation of yielding greater net revenue. Then, to mitigate risks, the arts organization sets up a system of supply and demand by means of the market conditions and fluctuation. Leveraging data as a commodity, arts organizations can use data as interchangeable currency, as inputs to detail qualitative and quantitative production of goods and services or assets with the intent to facilitate change. The result is a call for diversity brokers or advisors to participate in a diversity exchange market or centralized repository where participatory diversity exchange can occur (Lee). Engaging with a broadening demographic cannot come by way of externally focused program strategies simply to increase the representation of African-Americans. Rather, this process must include an internal assessment of the arts organizations’ practices to reveal what factors are hindering the organizations from moving towards organizational inclusivity. Perhaps the most compelling reason for increasing the number of underrepresented African-Americans in arts administration is the lack of equity in decision-making power.

Though not the focus of this paper, grant makers, foundations, and funding agents can facilitate diversity initiatives by not only impelling arts organization grantees to disclose their organizational diversity demographic, but also requesting openly that grantees or prospective grantees articulate how the organizations will apply intervention strategies to implement,

improve, or further advance their organization's diversity plans. In the same manner, funders can request the inclusion of historical data to accompany quantitative reporting as a metric to evaluate organizational performance (Lord, "Diversity as Disruption").

Both HBCUs and arts organizations, particularly cultural and community arts, serve significant numbers of low-income students, which includes first-time generation college students. Changes in federal and state legislature directly impact financial aid, grants, and loans. Arts organizations must accept that progress towards increasing diversity has been insignificant, aside from evolving language to define diversity in various contexts.

Nonprofit arts organizations need not rely on gut instincts to make informed decisions about organizational practices and policies, to measure the impact of programs, or to set benchmarks to reach their diversity goals. Rather, arts organizations can base policy and program decisions on current, more relative data to make informed decisions. In its work to improve diversity in the arts, DataArts, formerly founded as the Cultural Data Project, collects demographic, financial, and programmatic data about board members, staff, and volunteers. Founded to "bring the language and leverage of data to the business of culture," DataArts' future focus is "data-savvy cultural leadership in the twenty-first century." Using existing data within the California Cultural Data Project, the Diversity Arts Index was a response study by the Theatre Bay Area. (Lord, "Arts Diversity Index"). The study examined seven diversity types categorized by age, educational attainment, gender, household income, marital status, political status, and race/ethnicity using two simple indicators. The first indicator tracked race and ethnic background of the organization's board, staff, volunteers, new hires, and vendors. The second indicator was the number of exhibits that appealed to a diverse audience and the number of art pieces created by artists from underrepresented groups. Findings from this study support the

argument that arts organizations can use data to establish a reference point by which increases or decreases in movement towards diversity change can be accurately measured through a standardized data collection process. To work toward diversifying organizational staff, particularly those in leadership positions, organizations endeavor to build capacity that is representative of the community that it serves. However, the Arts Industry Index suggests that measuring diversity or moving towards quantifiably increasing diversity begins with first establishing a “baseline” for measurement (Lord, “Arts Diversity Index”). Then, and only then, can the arts organization measure diversity, whether against itself or the demographic profile where the organization exists.

As nonprofit arts organizations continue to promote transparency, they must let the numbers speak for themselves. There is a growing trend towards data collection, data sharing, and big data, yet important questions arise when endeavoring to measure diversity, such as who has access to data and who controls access to data (Lee). The arts industry is multidisciplinary, but the way we use data is often segmented. Arts organizations collect data from ticket holders, audience members, and donors, but repeatedly arts organizations are unsuccessful in using data effectively to reveal trends or patterns. Moreover, data sharing is cost effective. Arts organizations sharing data sets can avoid duplication in data collection (Lee). A few organizations have taken different approaches towards reducing the diversity gap. GuideStar President and CEO Jacob Harold posits that GuideStar is spearheading data collection on a national scale by voluntarily collecting demographic data from nonprofit boards, staff, and volunteers (Hrywna).

Using data to inform is the way to advance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Roos-Brown). With the onset of these demographic studies, nonprofit arts organizations can no longer operate from a

position of obliviousness. Only by gathering, sharing, and analyzing aggregate demographic data can arts organizations be well informed to make philanthropic, programmatic, and strategic decisions on how programs and diversity should coalesce to enhance and improve the impact of those programs. The field of arts administration is in its exploratory stages with data sharing. Looking forward, as arts organizations exchange best practices in data sharing, the more effective organizations can be through increased perspectives in measuring their impact. To that end, entrenched inequities, when quantified, provide a sobering indicator that must be acknowledged and addressed. In the same vein, diversity metrics can indicate progress towards diversity goals.

In 2015, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation released the first comprehensive study of diversity in art museums, *Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey*. Conducted with the Association of Art Museum Directors and the American Alliance of Museums, this nationwide survey shows progress for women in the museum field but no pipeline toward leadership for minorities. With the goal to “replace anecdotal evidence with hard data,” the survey offers the first statistical measurement for the museum field by which progress can be measured (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation). Although women represent a majority 60% of museum staff, the findings show that there is no pipeline towards leadership positions for staff where there has historically been an inadequate representation (*Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey*). Furthermore, the presence of minorities is clustered in the areas of human resources, finance, and facilities. Elizabeth Merritt, Director of American Alliance of Museum's Center for the Future of Museums, said:

To thrive in the long term, it is crucial that museums bring the demographic profile of their staff into alignment with that of the communities they serve. This

will require challenging a broad range of assumptions about how museums train, recruit and manage the staff responsible for collections, interpretation, education and leadership of our institutions. And it will require taking a hard, uncomfortable look at the conscious and unconscious influences that have shaped our institutional culture and created the current imbalance. (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation).

In making an attempt to find ways to address the low representation of historically underrepresented minorities in the museum field, the Mellon Foundation has taken important steps to create a more diverse, inclusive infrastructure. Using qualitative data or more recently available national quantitative data, findings from these studies point toward both internal and external shifts.

Some would argue that arts organizations must not become overly dependent on data, suggesting that arts organizations with limited capacity are unable to mine data consistently in a methodical way. Dissenters might argue that collecting, analyzing, and disseminating robust data requires a substantial amount of time and attention, and that inconsistencies in data collection would yield inaccurate results, thus rendering the data useless. To date, standardized metrics have not been made available to the arts administration field. To that end, investing time and resources toward data collection would require assigning a designated person or team to steer the process toward the end goal. Before arts organizations can address diversity gaps in arts administration in a strategic and meaningful way, they should focus not only on organizational capacity, but also on their adaptive capacity.

HBCUs may hold a unique advantage in the pursuit of diversity as a first responder by bolstering the participation of African-Americans in the arts administration field. From a

professional development perspective, HBCUs have consistently produced the overwhelming majority of African-American professionals (Cole, Roundtable II). In order to reduce the diversity gap in arts administration, while meeting the demands of the growing diversity, HBCUs can effectively prepare African-American students by developing arts administration competencies for today's workforce (Beckman 99). HBCUs are primed to cultivate community-based partnerships with arts organizations to address the dearth of African-Americans in volunteer and professional arts administration positions. HBCUs serve a greater number of African-American students, both traditional and non-traditionally aged. As a trusted and effectual partner to both student and community, the HBCU can be a sounding board for diversity gap solutions. Beyond traditional diversity recruitment and retention efforts that simply increase representation (Danowitz, Edeltraud, and Heike 72), the HBCU can systematically decrease the diversity gap by fully integrating diversity pipeline interventions providing exposure to the arts administration field by means of academic, career and professional development.

HBCUs were formed to counteract systemic exclusion. Inherent to its mission is inclusive based practices that seek to implement systematic diversity efforts to democratize both society, and the workforce, including but not limited to arts administration through the cultivation of diverse values, skillsets, and ideologies (Davis 148). Institutional culture, which supports diversity, is tied to institutional excellence and explicitly expressed in HBCU mission and admission policies (Wenglinsky 92).

HBCUs effectively leverage its dedicated professional alumni networks to continue to successfully produce undergraduate, graduate and professional candidates to facilitate academic and workplace preparation (Freeman 357). Critical to the fiscal support of HBCUs, alumni

networks also provide a gateway for students to connect to professional associates, and participate in professional exchanges, therefore further developing and strengthening professional mentorships.

As a community-based institution, the HBCU is a cultural and education anchor providing access to both formal and vocational education, the epicenter for cultural immersion, and community based programs. Uniquely positioned to reach high school students considering college options, undergraduate and graduate students preparing to enter the workforce, and professionals reassessing career directions, the HBCU stratifies education, business, and community. In doing so, the institutional effectiveness of the HBCU is a national example in academic advancement, and community development.

With a short-term economic impact of ten billion (National Center for Education Statistics), the HBCU is a driver of effective diversity offering pedagogical and research expertise, academic interventions and policies to increase the number of African-Americans to the field of arts administration. By expanding the educational pipeline to include less academically prepared students, the HBCU reduces the disparity found within pre-college educational experiences of African-Americans despite the degree of inequity in early academic preparation (Bonaparte, Lim, and Okoro 106). To that end, to address the deficit of African-Americans in the arts administration field, the HBCU can increase the number of African-Americans who elect to enter the field as a profession. Subsequently an increase in the contributions of African-American perspectives can be included.

Research has espoused the benefits of a diverse workforce. A key factor towards embracing diversity is cultural competency (Arminio et al. 506). In order to increase diversity in arts administration it is critical to expand the pipeline of African-American arts leaders who

strategically and purposefully use decision-making skills to impact the arts community. With its existing federal, state and local partnerships, the HBCU is well equipped to continue to build upon its documented evidence of success in preparing African-Americans to enter the workforce, and become a national frontrunner in creating and expanding a pipeline for training African-American arts administrators to enter and become successful in the field.

A number of arts organizations currently use metrics such as surveys, phone interviews, or focus groups to successfully engage with audiences, staff, and donors. Population shifts are dynamic. Arts organizations must not simply collect data but they must also analyze it and share the results with key internal and external stakeholders. In order to shape the diversity initiative, organizations must be aware of the changes and stand ready to adapt to them. Furthermore, arts organizations can engage in asset mapping to identify the impact of cultural institutions in the community, and inversely the impact of the community on the culture (Dewey, “Training Arts Administrators” 9).

## Chapter II THE HBCU EXPERIENCE

The Black College and University Act defines the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) as one that existed before 1964 with the sole mission and purpose of educating blacks while being open to all students (Abelman and Dalessandro 105). Further requisites specify that the HBCU must have earned accreditation through a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or be making a reasonable effort to secure accreditation. To date, there are 107 HBCUs, both public and private, in the United States. These institutions serve as junior or community colleges, four-year colleges, and professional medical and law schools (National Center for Education Statistics). Prior to the civil rights era, HBCUs were formed to fill gaps in the higher education of black students (Harper, Patton, and Wooden 389). During this time of racially discriminatory practices within education and society-at-large, pervasive segregation in public policy prohibited Blacks from receiving any formal education. The historic mission of HBCUs grew out of racially inequitable policies and practices in education that existed prior to the Civil War (Gasman and McMickens 287). There were, however, a handful of Blacks who were provided the rare opportunity to attend white colleges in the North. Christian missionaries in some northern states established colleges in order to provide runaway slaves or free blacks with an education. Cheney University, founded in 1837, and Lincoln University, founded in 1854, both located in Pennsylvania, were among the first HBCUs to be established. The majority of private HBCUs were founded during this period.

The significance of HBCUs in educating young Blacks during the era of legally mandated segregation was that it afforded academically capable and gifted African-American students the opportunity to attend an institution of higher learning, as often the HBCU was the only option to acquire a college education (United States Department of Education). Today, approximately 300,000 African-American undergraduate students are enrolled at HBCUs (Gasman and McMickens 287). The HBCU is the institutional defender of African-American cultural preservation, a promoter of intellectual discourse, and, for many African-Americans, the gateway towards educational, social, and economic success (Abelman and Dalessandro 106).

There is an ongoing discussion that HBCUs are no longer relevant. Even worse, some claim that HBCUs themselves reinforce the very segregationist practices they were founded to confront. While many praise HBCUs as forerunners for African-American equality, civil law has struck down sanctioned, discriminatory, higher education barriers for African-Americans. Straining to uphold archaic missions in lieu of dwindling financial resources, insignificant endowments (Abelman and Dalessandro 106), open enrollments, and poor physical structures not only compromises academic standards, but also reinforces racial segregation rather than promoting diverse perspectives through and within diverse groups (Flowers and Pascarella 675). African-American students now have choices in post-secondary studies, and many choose to attend a predominately white institution (PWI) which, in comparison to HBCUs, are more selective, yield higher graduation rates, offer comprehensive financial aid packages, have larger budgets, healthier endowments, improved facilities, and flexible curriculum.

Opponents to the relevancy of HBCUs are missing the point entirely. The strength of the HBCU is its ability to do consistently more with less, yet HBCUs must continually defend their right to exist (Davis 150). If HBCUs are being challenged to prove the applicability of their

distinguishable characteristics, then religious, military, and gender specific higher education institutions must be subjected to the same scrutiny (Hale 45). In a roundtable discussion and one-on-one interviews, past HBCU presidents were asked to respond to the question of why we need HBCUs. Johnnetta Cole, the first African-American female president of Spelman College, serving 1987–1997, responded:

If historically black colleges and universities did not exist, when we were in our positions (as HBCU presidents), it would have been necessary to invent them, for the simple reason that historically black colleges and universities then and yes today, are the places from which professional black America comes. I mean the figures are startling. Three-quarters of all African-Americans who hold a Ph.D. did their undergraduate work at institutions like the ones we were privileged to president. . . . the majority of judges, a good percentage of the doctors, the lawyers, the librarians, all did their undergraduate work in those institutions.

(Brown et al.)

Not only has the HBCU, by design, made a direct impact to the systematic advancement for African-Americans in the education, social, labor, and economic sectors in the U.S., but also it is incumbent that the HBCU with its revered faculty be enlisted to elevate the national discourse on diversity.

### Examining Student Perspectives on Arts Administration

Students who attend an HBCU may have demonstrated qualifications for the field of arts administration but lack awareness that the industry exists or be uninformed about the role and career trajectory of an arts administrator. When considering the demographic profile of arts administration higher education programs and the field of arts administration, the diversity gap is apparent. Arts administration higher education programs are not explicitly designed, evaluated, or marketed with African-American students in mind but rather parallel traditional arts organization staff and audiences (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 101). Therefore, arts organizations that recruit talent from graduate arts programs continue the progression of homogenous development of arts administrators into the field (Cuyler, “Career Paths” 27).

Arts educators in undergraduate higher administration programs can cultivate partnerships with HBCUs in order to improve their strategic efforts to recruit African-American students. HBCUs have established pipelines with high schools serving African-American communities (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 104). Additionally, African-American affinity groups, alumni, and professional networks can be a talent pool for non-traditional aged, older professionals who may enter arts administration by way of a second career.

Both cultural and non-cultural arts organizations can adopt a more purposeful strategy to increase visibility to African-American students and young, African-American professionals in the arts field. Arts administration has become professionalized and specialized as a viable career field (Dewey, “Systemic Capacity” 8). The field requires applicable skills, including, but not limited to leadership, marketing, strategic thinking, writing, budgeting, accounting, fundraising, program development, and management. Individuals in this field are not just knowledge-based, but must have the capacity to transfer that knowledge into a larger programmatic vision that

aligns with the mission of the organization (Cuyler, Hodges, and Hauptman 9; Martin and Rich 7).

In order to welcome in and connect with African-American students, arts organizations can become more visible at career fairs to leverage the opportunity to communicate with students who may not even consider arts administration as a viable field. Large or prominent cultural arts institutions, such as Alvin Ailey Dance Theater or Dance Theatre of Harlem, are easily recognized for their contribution to the arts. Historic movements such as the Harlem Renaissance Movement or the Black Arts Movement celebrated African-American artistic contributions to the performing, visual, or literary arts that are significant to our historical fabric (Muslar). This is not to suggest that arts organizations should downplay the significance that community arts organizations play in fostering relationships with underrepresented groups by providing arts exposure not found in elementary or secondary schools. Iconic institutions, such as Alvin Ailey Dance Theater or Dance Theatre of Harlem, have a cross-cultural visual identity with a recognizable cultural influence within the arts sector.

Arts organizations can draw on the connection between student interest in the arts and student interest in giving back to their communities. The community arts organization is a vehicle to conceptualize the intersection of the two interests. Historically, many HBCUs were the first institutionalized cultural immersion for students (Davis 144). Today, most HBCUs have established campus traditions like homecoming. Organized around a central event, homecoming encompasses a full itinerary of culture, sports, and social gatherings, including student and alumni networking and leadership meetings, step shows, parades, luncheons, and gala events. Homecoming events are highly visible with participation from college leadership celebrating HBCU culture and youth vibrancy (Arminio et al. 498). In comparison to the majority of HBCU

students, students at PWI with higher socioeconomic status exposure to arts and culture may come by way of family, elementary or secondary education, and personal networks (Davis 149). Consequently, higher economic status can regulate the volume or extent of quality arts exposure as a participant or recipient. The HBCU student, although less academically prepared, and often at a socioeconomic disadvantage than their peers at a PWI, has the same aspirations toward career options yet fail to attain those goals (Allen 28). Robert Littleton's findings in his study "Campus involvement among African American students at small, predominantly white colleges", asserted that student integration within the academic and social scheme of the institution propels students toward a greater persistence to graduation. Rather than using retention-based factors, specifically why students leave an organization, the study examines the experiences of African-American students who persisted to their junior or senior year (53, 54). An interesting parallel can be made in regarding arts based organizations seeking to retain African-American candidates. Organizations that use preemptive, performance based measurements that validate employee progress rather than engaging in retention strategies, such as exit interviews, may have greater success increasing employee tenure (Ehrhart and Ziegert 901).

A degree in arts administration can give a student the power to curate his or her own artistic career. Arts funders and organizations are recognizing the necessity of not only supporting artists of color, but also "strengthening the pipeline of racially diverse arts administrators and building capacity for long-term financial stability" (The Joyce Foundation). Preparing post-secondary students to enter the field of arts administration begins with exposure in secondary schools. Muslar states in her article:

Not only do organizations need to understand their role in introducing the arts, but high schools, colleges, universities, and graduate programs need to know that they are the places where the role of the arts administrator can be revealed. Many career paths follow the road of the 'accidental arts administrator'. (Muslar)

Knowing early on that this field of arts administration exists can help to build awareness and interest among students. Familiarity is an important factor when considering arts administration as a career choice (Cuyler, "Career Paths" 4). Arts organizations can build awareness in consistent messaging and marketing to African-American students. Organizations should examine what factors inform African-American students when considering their career choices. For example, when introducing or connecting students to the field of arts administration, what value is offered by a career in the arts? If students perceive that the career trajectory aligns well with their values, opinions, or goals, then their perception of the organization will be positive (Arminio et al. 499). However, if the organizational core values or demographic make-up is incongruent with the students' values then students might be deterred from considering arts administration as a viable career choice (Ehrhart and Ziegert 902). How students perceive and identify as a minority in the workplace can influence their career trajectory (Arminio et al. 503). Conventional models of leadership fostered in student campus groups are often hierarchical, that is president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. However, African-American students can hold a disregard for the leadership label in its conventional context. The HBCU acts as an extended family, a network of faculty and administrators who work to develop self-awareness in students (Hale 46). How students view their own racial identity and experiences can influence how students respond to leadership (Arminio et al. 498). Pressures to conform to external norms contrary to their own, creates a conflict W.E.B. Du Bois described as double consciousness in his

1903 publication, *The Souls of Black Folk* (3). African-American HBCU students' values and experiences align with HBCU's mission and purpose (Jewell and Allen 242). African-American student organizations can help develop leadership skills while fostering social and political participation (Palmer, Davis, and Maramba 86). Palmer posits that African-American male students attending HBCUS may view the traditional ideologies upheld by HBCUs as "conservative" and "unwelcoming" (87). Literature is explicit on the impact of the HBCU to facilitate academic achievement. However, Palmer points out that very little research has been directed toward the success of African-American males attending HBCUs (87).

The Association of Arts Administration Educators (AAAE) describes the field of arts administration as "adolescent" (AAAE). Requiring both theoretical and practical knowledge, preparation for arts administration is varied. That is, undergraduate and graduate programs can be housed within fine arts departments, schools of business, cross-degree, or interdisciplinary. Furthermore, programs can be delivered on-campus, as a hybrid or distance-learning format. Similar to the variation in program delivery and location within the university (Beckman 88), arts administration degree and certificate programs are likewise wide-ranging, from the more common arts administration and arts management to creative and cultural policy, arts and cultural management, leadership in the arts & entertainment industries, leadership for creative industries, and cultural management (Dewey, "From Arts Management" 13). Calling attention to the need for further defining the role and preparation of arts administrators, AAAE has taken steps to offer formal standards for core curriculum for higher education, both undergraduate and graduate.

Higher education arts administration has produced more specialized arts administrators to serve the field; however, their programs lack a strong representation of African-American

candidates. Arts practitioners are increasingly seeking individuals with strong preparation in fundraising, marketing, public relations, and law (Martin 4). The intersection of HBCU expertise and the arts organization's collaboration with AAAE can develop a partnership to advance recruitment to African-American students. African-American student organizations on HBCU campuses can be an ally to understanding the various within-group characteristics, perspectives, and opinions held by African-Americans with diverse backgrounds. This challenge presents a significant opportunity for the HBCU to be involved in crafting the diversity discourse and the shared language that resonates with African-American students (Gasman and McMickens 287).

Corporations have been immensely successful in attracting young, African-American graduates into business, and HBCUs have done equally well to graduate professionals to enter the technology, engineering, and business sectors (Evans, Evans, and Evans 8). This supports the argument that graduates of HBCU demonstrate business insight and leadership, and furthermore speaks to the effectiveness of HBCUs in preparing professionals to enter the workforce and to exceed. This may further suggest that arts organizations may want to present arts administration in a new, enterprising context to attract more African-American students (Beckman 97). Specialized or professional fields of study such as medicine, nursing, education, law, business, engineering, and social work require licensure. Such fields are accompanied by standards of practice and, more often than not, secure higher paying jobs. To reach African-American students, terminology must be framed that defines arts administration within the context of business (Beckman 99).

Although the terms "arts administration" and "arts management" are used interchangeably within the arts field, young students exploring the field may associate career growth with management (Caust 154). In comparison, students may associate administration

with a support role. In the same vein, when investigating nonprofit arts administration as a career option, students define nonprofit as charity, and, therefore, not a worthwhile, financially advantageous career pursuit (Bowman 231). Following that assumption, connecting arts administration to other sectors beyond nonprofit, such as for-profit entertainment, education, community development, civic engagement, entrepreneurship, and leadership, can elicit a more favorable response toward entering the field.

To that end, both HBCU higher education fine arts faculty and administrators, in collaboration with arts organizations, should address the evolving definitions and language that define arts administration as whole. For the benefit of African-American students being introduced to the field, conceptualizing the role of arts administrator involves connecting higher education pedagogy, path to education, and career trajectory. HBCUs and arts organizations can address this challenge as an opportunity to inform the field.

### Barriers to Participation

Access to higher education has many advantages yet remains out of reach for many African-American students (Hale 54). Personal, environmental, and institutional barriers delay access to or thwart higher education degree aspirations. Removing academic barriers by providing remedial instruction to support less academically prepared students, the HBCU recognizes that students with limited academic preparation can still thrive if consistently supported (Bonaparte, Lim, and Okoro 105). Inadequate preparation should not be misunderstood as aptitude deficiency. As HBCUs provide mentors in addition to academic advisors to guide students through the admissions process, students can develop positive faculty and administrative relationships throughout their academic tenure. HBCUs encircle incoming

students with academic, social, and financial support services to ensure student academic success and college completion (Hale 54, 55, 60).

On February 4, 2009, in his Address to the Joint Session of Congress, President Obama issued the 2020 College Completion Goal. Key benchmarks include closing the opportunity gap, increasing graduation rates, and making the United States first in the world for college completion (United States Department of Education). African-American students face personal, environmental, and institutional barriers when applying to college. The HBCU has been instrumental in guiding, supporting, developing, and graduating students, particularly students facing additional challenges. Low-income, first-time college students require additional financial assistance and support navigating the college application and admissions process. Personal, family, and work responsibilities add pressures that compete with students' time needed for academic pursuits. Despite these barriers, positive student outcomes can be attributed to the HBCU environment and students' career aspirations (Allen 39). During the 2011 HBCU Week, President Obama made the following remarks:

HBCUs continue a proud tradition as vibrant centers of intellectual inquiry and engines of scientific discovery and innovation. New waves of students, faculty, and alumni are building on their rich legacies and helping America achieve our goal of once again leading the world in having the highest proportion of college graduates by 2020. (The White House)

Investment in HBCUs is critical in order to continue their success in preparing and developing future leaders (Hale 49). There are some that view the HBCU phenomena with skepticism. Increasingly, funding dollars are tied to enrollment. In recent years, HBCU enrollment has declined. In 2012–2013, HBCUs awarded 15% of bachelor's degrees to African-

American students compared to 35% of bachelor's degrees to African-American students between 1976–1977 (National Center for Educational Statistics).

African-American students are applying to and being accepted to PWIs that can aggressively compete to attract the most academically talented students. Consequently, HBCUs must now compete with institutions with significantly higher endowments, funding streams, and physical resources (Clay 5). Furthermore, low student graduation rates at HBCUs, compounded by the majority of students' dependency of financial aid need, suggest that HBCUs are underperforming, and, therefore, higher education appropriations should be directed toward institutions that are demonstrating success in college completion rates (Hale 8). Despite a critical shortage of financial and physical resources, HBCUs have demonstrated effective institutional outcomes that are equal to or greater than that of PWIs. Opposing opinions continue to point toward low retention rates, which on the surface may appear accurate. However, upon closer review, research suggests that HBCUs graduation rates are on par with PWIs (Bonaparte, Lim, and Okoro 105).

According to the 2013 study by the National Center for Educational Statistics, the graduation rate for first-time, degree-seeking, full-time undergraduate students, entering in the fall of 2007 at four-year colleges and completing their degree at the same institution, was 59.2% for both male and female. The graduation rate by race/ethnicity for the 2007 cohort is 62.0% White; 40.8% African-American; 52.5% Hispanic; 70% Asian/Pacific Islander; 40.6% American Indian/Alaskan Native; 67.8% two or more races; and 63.9% non-resident alien. In comparison to the national average of 40.8% for African-American students cited by NCES, twenty-three of the fifty-two HBCUs on the list compiled by the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* had graduation rates of 40% or higher. HBCUs are relatively on par with the national graduation rate,

producing African-American graduates at the same rate as African-Americans attending PWIs. Therefore, African-American students attending an HBCU have a greater assurance of graduating within six years than if attended a PWI.

It is worth noting that higher education institutions with a competitive or selective admissions policy have a higher graduation rate than those institutions that are less competitive or have an open admissions policy. In an effort to remove barriers to higher education, HBCUs, when compared to PWIs, remains the gateway to higher education by allowing open enrollment or unselective admissions in order to continue to provide students who possess a high school diploma access to higher education (Kim 401). This is important to HBCUs as the institutions rely heavily on funding, particularly as most have a greater proportion of undergraduates than graduates within their colleges (Evans, Evans, and Evans 8, 10, 11).

### The Great Debate

HBCUs are distinguished by their mission and are uniquely positioned to address the personal, environmental, and institutional barriers faced by African-American students (Hale 55-58). According to survey data collected in 2005 by the National Study for Student Engagement (NSSE), students at HBCUs reported higher levels of engagement on some survey dimensions than their counterparts at non-HBCUs or PWIs. The 2004 and 2005 NSSE data from thirty-seven HBCUs indicate that African-American students reported greater interaction with faculty than African-American students at PWIs (United States Commission on Civil Rights 56-57). Additional studies report that African-American students attending HBCUs are more likely to participate in faculty research projects than their African-American counterparts at non-HBCUs (Cokely 288). Students at these HBCUs reported that attendance at an HBCU was a key indicator and contributor to their personal and spiritual growth, and additionally reported a greater sense of

civic responsibility, particularly seeking employment directly within their respective communities, compared to their African-American colleagues at PWIs (Hale 48).

HBCUs have an average graduation rate of 55%, which is lower when compared to the average graduation rate for non-HBCUs at 63%. HBCUs generally moderate admission policies, in order to accommodate average students with weaker academic profiles, may be the reason for this occurrence. However, for students with similar academic proficiency, attendance at an HBCU versus a non-HBCU made no difference in the likelihood that the individual African-American student would obtain a bachelor's degree (Kim and Conrad 421). Because their admission policies reduce the incongruent academic match between student and institution, which is more likely to occur with the student attending non-HBCUs, HBCUs are typically more successful in educating, and equally, if not more critically, graduating a disproportionately larger number of African-American students (Bonaparte, Lim, and Okoro 107, 114).

When comparing institutions in the NSSE 2005 study, African-American seniors attending an HBCU are considerably more likely to be engaged in collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, and enrichment experiences (National Center for Educational Statistics). African-American college students attending HBCUs are encouraged and supported to seek leadership roles within campus groups. Additionally, students at HBCUs reported that their relationship with student administrative personnel and offices was critical, which suggests that the student's relationship with non-faculty members may play a crucial role in their academic success (Arminio et al. 497).

Student learning is enhanced when students develop and form relationships with non-faculty, administrative personnel beyond disciplinary action or setbacks (Arminio et al. 506). When an administrative unit, such as a Student Affairs office, encourages feedback from

students in regard to institutional policies and procedures, students can safely question policies and offer reactions to current issues, experiences, events, or policies without fear of retaliation—a not-so-unusual experience often internalized by marginalized individuals. Building formal mentoring relationships between students and staff entreats HBCU faculty and administrators to consistently provide support for students who may seek guidance towards a similar career path (Clay 17). Consequently, staff or faculty who engage with the student can create a first-hand experience guided by meaningful feedback that can inform the student navigating through unfamiliar or uncharted academic territory (United States Commission on Civil Rights).

The NSSE data also suggests that HBCUs deliver a greater level of student engagement, which translates into a heightened or enriched educational experience that supports students' academic pursuits. This increased engagement is an important indicator of the effectiveness of HBCUs, correlating strongly to the success and retention of students. Low-income, first generation, or disabled African-American students rely heavily on the HBCU, which advocates for students from academic and economic disadvantaged conditions. HBCUs diligently work to provide these students with added academic support, guidance, advising, and mentoring, which are paramount for students to gain admission and navigate through their academic tenure successfully (Wenglinsky 95).

### Chapter III THE PIPELINE VIEW

The demographic pipeline of typical arts organizations mirrors the performing and visual arts audience. Associate Professor of Theater and the Director of the MFA Program in Performing Arts Management at Brooklyn College, Tobie S. Stein references *Government, For-profit and Third Sector Employment: Differences by Race and Sex, 1950–1990* (Burbridge), documenting the outlook of racial employment patterns of nonprofit managers over a forty-year period. Stein’s assertion, based upon Burbridge’s historical data together with *Nonprofit Management and Leadership: The Status of People of Color*, is that these two national studies indicate improvement for African-Americans. However, there is an overwhelming imbalance in the positions held by whites and people of color (Rogers and Smith). Rogers and Smith’s study concludes that people of color represent 14.3% of the managers working within the nonprofit sector, which includes arts and culture, education, human services, charities, and hospitals. Additionally, the study reported 27.4% of individuals working in the non-profit sector have some graduate education, of which 87.4% are white and 12.5% are people of color.

Barry Hessenius, editor of *Barry’s Blog*, a service of the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF), centered on the issue of diversity and the single white frame in his March 18, 2013 entry titled “The Unbearable Whiteness of Being”:

The simple answer is that this white frame, this underlying belief that things white are preferable to things of color has doubtless had an effect on our decision making process. Very likely in ways we haven’t and still don’t fully see or

appreciate. If the white frame accurately portrays the white (dominant) societal preference for things white, then the long legacy of that kind of thinking surely must have played (and continues to play) some role in the development and support for the arts in America too - at least in some overall sense - for audience preference, financial support and even access to creation. I think the white racial frame has impacted and influenced our decision-making and how, over decades, the nonprofit arts universe has grown and been shaped. I think part of this process has been intentional (though not necessarily malevolent), and part of it has been by omission to deal with the ramifications of those actions.

To ascribe the lack of diversity in the nonprofit arts industry to the single notion of white racial frame is in all probability neither absolute nor conclusive. However, to ignore the embedded vestiges and silent but systematic heritage of its influence on the decision-making process sends a message of unresponsiveness. The single and the White Racial Frame, a construct created and defined by sociologist Joe Feagan is defined as:

An overarching worldview, one that encompasses important racial ideas, terms, images, emotion and interpretation. For centuries now, it has been a basic and foundational frame from which a substantial majority of white Americans-as well as others seeking to conform to white norms-view our highly racialized society.

(Hennesius)

Rather than dismiss the notion that diversity can be measured, arts organizations should investigate what indicators must be in place to determine if they are successfully achieving their diversity goals.

According to the Urban Institute's report, *Measuring Racial-Ethnic Diversity in the Baltimore-Washington Region's Nonprofit Sector*, the collaborative project found that in leadership, "Arts organizations are least likely to have an executive director of color. Only 10 percent of these organizations are led by a person of color" (De Vita and Roeger 7). Regarding governing boards, "Nonprofit arts organizations have the least diverse boards. Most board members are non-Hispanic whites; only 13% of board positions, on average, are filled by people of color" (De Vita and Roeger 12). For staff, "Nonprofits in the arts and educational fields generally have less than half their paid staff from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Twenty-seven percent of staff in arts organizations are people of color, as are 37 percent of those in educational nonprofits" (De Vita and Roeger 17). Finally, in regard to policies, "There is no clear pattern related to which types of nonprofits have diversity policies. Staff diversity policies are most common in human service (43 percent) and arts (40 percent) organizations" (De Vita and Roeger 20).

Arts organizations seeking to increase the number of African-American candidates must do so with transparency that reflects their intentions. A disconnect between value and action exists. HBCU students possess skills, talent, and motivation but often miss the opportunity to engage because of extraneous pressures. At the same time, arts organizations seeking to increase capacity while forwarding diversity initiatives, have open opportunities yet are unable to consistently recruit, fill, and develop African-American talent for these roles. HBCUs supply cultural, structural, and human capital to the workforce. The 2010 Retention and Vacancy Report produced by Opportunity Knocks, a national human resource and career development resource, conducted a study with 300 nonprofit organizations collectively employing about 30,000

individuals. The average turnover rate was 16%; however, the highest turnover rate, 35%, was found to be in the arts sector, which encompasses arts, cultural, and humanities organizations (2).

Adding to these findings, Gad Levanon, managing director of macroeconomic and labor market research at The Conference Board, postulated in 2014, “15 years of a tight labor market is around the corner”. With that in mind, given the combination of improved economy, declining unemployment rate, and job competitiveness as a result of baby boomers aging out of the workforce, retention will no doubt deteriorate. If arts organizations find it difficult to recruit qualified candidates now, how much greater will the challenge be five, ten, or fifteen years from now? Furthermore, if the predictions about the movement in the labor force hold true, then attracting, recruiting, and retaining candidates will be arduous in a competitive job market. According to the US Census Bureau 2015 report, those born between 1982 and 2000 (Millennials), represent one-fourth of the nation’s population at 83.1 million as of 2015, exceeding the 75.4 million baby boomers. It is worth noting the report stated 44.2% of Millennials identify with, or are part of, a minority or ethnic group. The US labor force is polarized by individuals in the baby boomer generation aging out of the workforce and by individuals in the millennial generation entering the workforce.

On the surface it may appear that Millennials tend to change jobs more frequently. Following that assumption, comparing generation to generation, job change is often predicated by an opportunity to advance or for higher wages. To that end, younger employees are more inclined to change jobs more often. Research from the 2014 Bureau of Labor Statistics confirms that 20–24 year olds had an average tenure of 1.3 years. This same study conducted in 1996 indicated that 20–24 year olds maintained their current position in the workplace for 1.2 years. These findings underscore the significance of leadership in staff retention.

Arts managers play a crucial role in developing African-American arts administrators. Today's arts managers must possess an understanding of artistic and creative expression with the professional skills and competencies in fundraising, marketing, and public relations. Added to this skillset and as a qualification of leadership should include diversity training (Box, Converso, and Osayamwen 23). Understanding that their role extends beyond strategic outcomes, arts managers can interact within the organizational network to influence and stimulate growth, rather than hold a position over a group or individual. Some argue that there is a growing trend for arts managers to adopt a business model of leadership that focuses more on organizational mechanics, which weakens the organization (Caust 153). There is also healthy debate concerning the influence of the business model within the arts sector, that is, framing leadership within a business model with a focus on the bottom line rather than artistic vision being paramount (Caust 154).

Emerging arts leaders must possess creative, intellectual, and professional acumen to maximize human potential, to process information, and contextualize its findings into quantifiable organizational growth. Arts managers must be able to support the development of or adapt to a diversity competency within the arts organization (Cox 4). As an agent of change, the arts manager can build a case for better outcomes through innovative teamwork and increased equitable participation. Individuals that are valued for their contributions are not only more likely to commit to the mission, team, or organizational targets, but also more likely to perform to capacity. To that end, arts managers can play a significant role in guiding the career trajectory of emerging arts administrators, thereby decreasing the gap in African-American representation in leadership and governance positions.

Arts organizations need not solely rely on anecdotal evidence to measure their impact (Roos-Brown). Measuring the diversity return on investment, arts organizations build a compelling case of diversity deliverables. Additionally, organizations can develop a framework that links diversity and performance. At the convergence of leveraging the benefits of diversity and data, arts organizations can not only identify but also quantify the connection between job performance and employee valuation (Cuyler, “The Career Paths” 36). A review of research identified systematic steps to connect diversity with organizational performance. Cox posited the primary reason organizations fall short with diversity initiatives is that they fail to connect diversity in those initiatives to organizational systems (279). Stated differently, they failed to connect diversity to other quantifiable functions such as strategic planning, performance, human resources, and compensation. The prevailing idea here is that diversity strategies are not simply human resource strategies to expand diversity but are more of a comprehensive quantifiable effort that infuses each level of the organization.

Human resource officers rely on methodological recruitment strategies from reliable sources to enlist potential employees well matched to the organization’s dominant culture. Most often, African-Americans who do not fit within the existing homogenous culture will leave on their own accord or be fired (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 102). As a result, both contributory actions preserve the dominant culture. Following this paradigm, arts organizations must go beyond looking at diversity as merely a cultural change, but view it as structural and behavioral change as well (Ragins 91).

### Segments of the Pipeline

African-American Alumni

It might appear HBCUs are most relevant to the African-American experience, but most PWIs have diversity inclusion policies, African-American Student Union groups, and alumni networks. However, the fact that under-resourced HBCUs have effectively graduated leaders in business, health sciences, engineering, and liberal arts demonstrates the organizational capacity to develop connections, utilizing existing alumni networks to cultivate relationships among faculty, staff, students, and families of students (Freeman 357). HBCU alumni networks are a critical resource for connecting first-year students with a mentor during the admissions process. For upper-level students, alumni networks can be a source for exploring career options. For those considering attending an HBCU, the alumni network can propagate the uniquely robust social, academic, and cultural life of the HBCU. For the institution, alumni networks serve as a donor base to continue to advance the mission of the HBCU (Bowman 231).

When comparing financial solvency, HBCUs are at a distinct disadvantage compared to PWIs. With more African-American students attending PWIs and graduating, along with the demographic shift in population increase, African-American alumni donors will take a more prominent role. Therefore, the need for cultivation and solicitation of African-Americans is paramount. Alumni donations spearhead new programs, improve facilities, and provide much needed scholarships to deserving students with demonstrated financial need. There is a lack of African-American fundraising personnel within HBCUs, PWIs, and the arts community (Bowman 230). The field remains distinctly homogenous. Limited resourced HBCUs must make up operating deficits rather than deny African-American students access to higher education. In fact, HBCUs have to do more with less. Research suggests that HBCUs leverage limited resources, existing connections, and embrace inclusivity and diversity, which speaks to their innovate thought and shared strength. An opportunity exists for HBCUs to not only increase

diversity within the field of arts administration, but also specifically address the need to develop African-American fundraisers. According to the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), there are 30,000 registered fundraisers (Association of Fundraising Professionals). Of that number, 11% are minorities (Bowman 231). At the intersection of HBCUs lacking fiscal resources needed to grow endowments, arts organizations seeking to diversify its staff and leadership, and HBCU students seeking a viable career option to the field of arts administration, is the opportunity to develop emerging arts fundraisers. Critical to all three, the HBCU, the arts organization, and the African-American student, is the essential need to survive.

A collaborative partnership between the arts organization and HBCU can be vital to professional development of students to connect theoretical knowledge with real world application (Cuyler, Hodges, and Hauptman 6). Student internships within a partnering arts organization provide an opportunity for students to practice within a work setting as preparation for the workplace, presenting enterprising solutions to current organizational challenges (Cuyler and Hodges 68). Arts organization hosting HBCU students can strengthen the diversity pipeline and engage students as potential employees. HBCUs' physical resources, such as open space, buildings, or classrooms, can provide the additional space needed by small arts organizations. HBCUs can reconnect their resources to the community they serve and become even more visible to a new or expanded group of diverse and non-traditional students.

Transformational leadership and partnership is needed to begin to address the diversity challenge. Research substantiates the shared resources; collaborative partnerships, if done well, can propel the initiatives forward, producing a net gain for all participants (Cuyler, Hodges, and Hauptman 9). Similar to career-focused HBCU students pursuing professionally licensed business, medicine, health, and education majors, the HBCU-based fundraising program can

prepare students to gain credentialing through a certifying body such as the Certified Fund-Raising Executive (CFRE). A partnership with an arts organization is also an in-reach opportunity to invest in the local arts community. An effective tool for enterprising students to address urgent community challenges, the HBCU bridges the connection between the student and the arts organization.

### Arts Administration Higher Education Programs

Given the statistical prediction of population increase of minority and ethnic groups, how are arts organizations and arts administration programs preparing for the demographic shift? Arts administration higher education programs have a responsibility to prepare students to work in a diverse work environment by offering stand-alone diversity courses or incorporating diversity units into existing courses (Dewey, "Training Arts Administrators" 5). Diversity issues and standards are inherent within human resource management or public law coursework, as both courses present a platform for addressing diversity in workplace policy, procedures, and regulations. While a writing or financial course may not propose diversity as the essential objective, instructional strategies of the faculty member can determine the level of diversity integration within the course. Such an integrative approach necessitates supplemental time, effort, and inventiveness on the part of the faculty member. Defensibly, outside of pedagogical practice, whether a stand-alone diversity course does or does not exist, students can be exposed to various viewpoints through collaborative projects, guest lecturers, student events, and speaker series.

As the workplace becomes more diverse, cultural competence becomes obligatory. In order to remain relevant, arts organizations should look at the need to attract African-American

students into the field. As the field of arts administration becomes more competitive, and if arts organizations increasingly focus their recruiting efforts towards traditional higher education arts administration programs with no stand-alone coursework in diversity, either as a core requirement or elective, then how can we determine that non-African-American students are prepared to work within a culturally diverse work environment or serve a culturally diverse public. If their higher education experience parallels their largely homogenous work environment, that is, without a diversity plan across the program curriculum, we can conclude that higher education arts administration programs are reinforcing the notion that diversity is something to be valued and promoted, not a requisite for developing a culturally competent arts administrator (Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako 80).

If cultural competency is an essential skill for preparation to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce, then are traditional higher education arts administration programs that lack student diversity and diverse practice and pedagogy, effectively preparing graduates to serve in historically marginalized African-American communities? Further studies would propose the need for higher education arts administration programs to quantify the effectiveness of their graduates in the field. With the goal of increasing the pipeline for African-Americans into the field of arts administration, the call for an active institutional partner can be found within the HBCU to develop a metric to codify admissions, tracking students as they enter the higher education program through post graduate outcomes, in order to determine how they enter and progress in the field.

#### Arts Organizations

Recalling the aforementioned US Census Statistics which project that minorities will constitute the majority population by 2050, and the US Census Bureau's 2015 report citing

Millennials now outnumber Baby Boomers, if the arts and culture sector is intentional in recruiting undergraduate or graduate students of diverse race and ethnicity, then outreach and awareness campaign programs must be directed where African-American artists and arts administrators are developing their unique skill sets.

Arts organizations may recognize that finding minority candidates with leadership potential skills might not be as difficult as it seems. Organizations seeking to recruit African-American candidates can look within community, professional, social or religious groups, sororities and fraternities, higher education institutions, and alumni groups. Some of the most impactful leaders are those already connected to the communities that larger arts organizations are hoping to reach (Hewlett, Luce, and West 76). Encompassed within social, educational, and faith-based communities and experiences, African-Americans are currently working and developing skills that are inextricably linked to the role of the arts administrator.

Hewlett, Luce, and West reference Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business, Professor Ella Bell, in that African-American women “comprise the backbone of religious organizations and provide a significant part of the energy driving community service in the United States (76).” Employers should look at the outside lives of African-American professional females who are often playing a crucial leadership role in civic, religious, and volunteer organizations within their communities on a consistent basis. To define the skills gained by these experiences, Hewlett, Luce, and West borrow the term cultural capital defined by Pierre Bourdeau as the accumulation of “nonmonetary wealth and relationship capital generated outside the workplace” (76). Employers could benefit from the amassed skill-set developed by these professionals; however, often these aptitudes and proficiencies not only go unnoticed but also untapped.

African-American women lead their households, caring for immediate and extended family members while being employed (Hewlett, Luce, and West 79). Compared to their white colleagues, African-American professional women hone leadership skills at a disproportionately greater percentage of frequency and engagement within their communities in schools, shelters, hospitals, religious organizations, and libraries. Outside projects often supersede the complexity of the individual's regular employment. Because these women are viewed as leaders in their communities, they are often sought after, called upon, or appointed to strategize, implement, and direct projects, act as a spokesperson, or leverage funding for a community project. Given the impact of outside volunteer experiences on professional development, why then are employers reluctant to leverage the potential of these professionals?

The framework, which outside endeavors is pursued by African-American professional women, does not typically align with traditional male-dominated interests. Conversely, African-American women professionals, unlike their white male counterparts, are hesitant to communicate their outside endeavors to their employers. Rather than benefitting from consistently acquiring transferable skills from their outside professional development and upselling their abilities, African-American professionals downplay their cultural capital. Religion, often a taboo subject in the workplace, is a central component in the lives of African-Americans. Volunteer hours, particularly within a religious setting, are considered an extension of giving back to family rather than a legitimate position. African-American professional women are serving as mentors to emerging African-American children, youth, and young adults. Like their mentors, African-American college students participating in community involvement can develop transferable skills, which can be applied in the professional workplace.

In his report *Managers of the Arts: Careers and Opinions of Senior Administrators of U.S. Art Museums, Symphony Orchestras, Resident Theaters, and Local Arts Agencies* conducted approximately 29 years ago, Paul DiMaggio states:

Arts administration careers lack the formal structure that educational and internship requirements impose on the traditional professions and that managers of the largest corporations receive from internal labor markets. There are no formal ranks or systematic evaluations as there are in government service to provide individuals with guides to their own progress. (3)

The recruitment pipeline to arts administration careers for museum directors and orchestra managers was by way of graduation from formal education, although on the job training was the primary means of developing management skills. Concerning recruitment, DiMaggio hypothesizes:

To the extent that the rate of growth of the field covered in the study (and with it opportunities for career advancement) has declined during the 1980s, arts organizations may have trouble recruiting and, in particular, keeping talented administrators. It is thus all the more important to understand the rewards that keep administrators at their jobs. (3)

Although DiMaggio's report is almost 30 years ago, he makes several significant points about preparation for arts administration which are relevant for today, one being setting a clear trajectory for career advancement for individuals seeking senior level positions (34). Prior to the proliferation of higher education arts administration programs, preparation for arts administrators consisted of majoring in an artistic field and acquiring managerial skills on the job rather than acquiring arts administration skillsets through (45). The potential for career growth was limited

without a clear upward trajectory to move from entry level to senior level standing as DiMaggio stated, however even with the increase in higher education arts administration programs today, there remains a leadership gap in the field. This may suggest that the gap may be related to factors outside of academic preparation. The Americans for the Arts “2013 Local Arts Agency Salary Survey” revealed an upsetting yet predictable finding: arts organizations continue to have a diversity problem (Flores). The survey found that, in comparison to other nonprofit sectors or for-profit companies, arts administrator salaries are not commensurate with their education, background, and skills, or their input of arduous work hours beyond the forty-hour workweek. The findings indicated that ninety-two percent of the respondents identified as an Executive Director or CEO of an arts organization, and eighty-two percent of the overall respondents were white. Two percent of the respondents identified as Black/African-American (“Research Report” 6). Enticing African-American candidates to the field of arts administration may prove difficult given these findings (Cuyler, “The Career Paths” 44).

Sourcing potential candidates into the field of arts administration through systemic recruitment should be universal. Diversity and recruitment should be practiced jointly; to consider one without the other is futile. Valuing diversity and managing diversity are not the same. Chelladurai and Doherty explain, “We can both value diversity and resist it at the same time within our organizations, and that resistance can be entirely subconscious” (289). Diversity conversations, albeit difficult to engage in and often entangled with fear, uncertainty, and risk, particularly for small to medium arts organizations where the gamble of alienating staff is not unlikely, are necessary. Nonprofit arts organizations with limited resources should seek external partners with a strong commitment to diversity to guide them through developing core values, vision, and strategies to create a culture of diversity.

Addressing diversity requires both internal and external examination (Grams and Farrell 66). A local HBCU partner can be a resource to facilitate delicate discussions about race, ethnicity, and economic disparity and community responsibility. Having an HBCU as a collaborator can dispel the “us” against “them” pitfall of superficial diversification to encompass the broader community that the organization serves. Organizations seeking to add or increase the number of African-Americans within its staff, leadership, and board can demonstrate their commitment to diversity by giving voice to African-Americans, as constituents of the services administered by the organization, providing opportunity to be heard and to hold position in decision-making.

Corporations understand the value of the customer base in order to compete in the global economy and act with expediency to survive the marketplace. AT&T targets its recruitment effort to areas where African-American students come together—on the campuses of HBCUs. Recruiters not only host specific recruiting events, but also participate in on-campus events, career fairs, and on-site interviews. Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer of Chubb Insurance, Meaghan Henson, remarks about the partnership with Howard University, an HBCU in Washington, D.C.:

This partnership focuses on exposing diverse students to our industry by inviting them to spend a day in one of our 50 branch offices across the country. Through this experience, as well as interactions with Chubb leaders, students develop an awareness of how they can build a lifelong career at Chubb. (Salemi)

Having diverse personnel is just good business. Corporations use quantitative and qualitative data to inform recruitment strategies. Businesses expand their consumer base by tapping a larger pool of candidates, which in turn increases the chances of identifying more

qualified and experienced hires. Essentially by mirroring the personnel and consumer base, corporations are effectively recruiting, and retaining minority candidates (Marquis et al. 6). As with nonprofit arts organizations, recruiting African-American clients must not be a shallow endeavor, which results in alienation and tokenism. If the absence of African-Americans at the leadership level exists or if African-American personnel are relegated to entry-level, knowledge-based, or service positions, then true organizational diversity has not been achieved (Golden-Biddle and Linduff 301).

The Association of Arts Administration Educators seeks to formalize and standardize arts administration. Some would argue the validity of Arts Administration as a viable industry. Charles Dorn in his article, “Arts Administration: A Field of Dreams?” considered whether arts administration is a serious academic field (241). Michael Sikes’ “Higher education training in arts administration: A millennial and metaphoric reappraisal” concurs with Dorn’s position that arts administration programs have been unsuccessful in aligning higher education pedagogical content to support the field. Sikes further suggests the survival of arts organizations is dependent upon whether arts administration programs can bridge the divide between what skills students possess and what arts employers prefer or require (91-92). Early in the development of the field, arts practitioners came into arts administration through many entry points. With the growth and development of arts administration programs, the field while not entirely standardized, has coalesced to shape a profession, albeit without standardized language and practice (Martin 4). Arts administration programs can vary by focus, whether business-based or arts-based. Geographic location also plays a role in curriculum or coursework. Institutions can focus on traditional arts, arts entrepreneurship, or folk arts/traditions. Programs can also vary in how or where they are delivered, whether on campus, online, or a hybrid of both. Arts administration

graduate programs, like arts organizations, lack diversity. If arts organizations continue to recruit from higher education institutional graduate programs, the cycle of diversity remains intact (Cuyler, “The Career Paths” 20).

HBCUs with fine arts departments and business departments can create cross-curricular, interdisciplinary experiences for students to gain exposure in the arts and business. Howard University, for example, offers a Theatre Administration Degree. Coppin State University in Baltimore, Maryland, offers an Urban Arts Degree. Both programs provide specific undergraduate arts administration coursework for students entering their junior and senior year. African-American students that attend HBCUs in their undergraduate years have a higher chance of continuing through graduate school to the masters or doctorate level than African-American students that attend PWIs (Clay 5).

## Chapter IV THE HOLISTIC VIEW

The cultivation of future arts administration leadership should be strategic and intentional and not dependent on students haphazardly falling into this profession (Cuyler, "Career Paths" 27). By challenging diversity recruitment assumptions currently held by the nonprofit arts industry, HBCUs must accept the role and responsibility of developing solutions to decrease the diversity gap rather than remaining silent on the existing diversity rhetoric.

Skills needed to succeed in arts administration are knowledge-based, transferable and interpersonal. HBCUs without formalized arts administration programs can, in collaboration with their fine arts program or external arts organization partners, develop introductory or exploratory arts administration seminars to develop arts administration competencies. Few HBCUs offer arts administration as a degree program. A cursory search for "arts administration and HBCU" produces few results. Bennett College, a private, four-year HBCU, offers Arts Management as an undergraduate degree; Howard University, a private HBCU, offers Theatre Arts Administration as an undergraduate degree; and Alabama State University, a public HBCU, offers Theatre Management concentration through its undergraduate Theatre Degree. Consequently, student encounters with arts administration may not be explicitly understood. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the HBCU in this context to expose its students to the field of arts administration. In order for students to consider arts administration as a career choice, they must have a base knowledge that the field of arts administration exists.

## The HBCU, the Arts Organization, and the HBCU Student

Persuading higher education stakeholders to accept their role and responsibility towards creating a pipeline for success for emerging arts leaders involves a collaborative approach. The HBCU and the arts organization must work in collaboration with the goal to develop and expand the knowledge base of emerging arts administrators. HBCUs are essential to the human growth and development of African-American students, families, and communities. HBCUs should not be under scrutiny to justify their institutional effectiveness, but should serve as an exemplar to other higher education institutions for research to study how HBCUs yield success in spite of existent challenges. Literature was unequivocal in suggesting that HBCUs with limited resources move less academically ready students from remedial instruction to graduation (Jewell and Allen 254). The literature points strongly to engagement as a critical factor for getting students on track towards college completion. This is not to imply that PWIs lack opportunities to engage African-American students. PWIs provide African-American students with improved resources, yet HBCUs consistently deliver academic interventions that support, develop, and stimulate academic growth in students (Kim and Conrad 415).

HBCU faculty role models, mentors, and staff encourage students to seek leadership roles on and beyond campus (Littleton 53). PWIs have a 63% graduation rate compared to 55% for HBCUs, yet when comparing students with similar backgrounds, attendance at an HBCU or PWI is not a mitigating factor to obtaining a bachelor's degree. HBCUs' success in preparing African-American students to enter science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields is recognized in postgraduate occupational career selection and representation in the field (Evans 8). HBCUs make up about 3% of higher education institutions, yet produce 20% of all African-American undergraduates (Jewell and Allen 257).

### The Role of the HBCU as Strategic Partner

Increasing diversity in arts administration is a shared responsibility between the HBCU, arts and culture sector, and the HBCU student. Each partner has a separate and distinct role yet collectively they function as a whole. The findings of this research necessitate several target observations, which include the following: compelling African-American HBCU students reached to consider arts administration as a career, preparing African-American HBCU students to enter the field of arts administration, increasing the representation of African-American graduates applying to and graduating from graduate arts administration programs, and creating a pipeline that quantifiably produces a diverse pool of talent to enter and advance in the field of arts administration. Rather than relying solely on established professional arts organizations to amplify their diversity efforts and raise awareness about the arts administration field its student body, HBCUs can offer arts administration programs at the undergraduate level and, in effect, develop their own crop of future arts administrators. Not only would HBCUs benefit from the pool of talented arts administrators to advance institutional missions, but also nonprofit arts organizations benefit significantly by the existence of an accessible pool of trained, culturally competent leaders to engage in the field. To that end, HBCUs both increase diversity within arts organizations and facilitate measurable impact on capacity building. Cuyler's "From Theory to Practice in the Ivory Tower: How Degree Programs in Arts Management Contribute to Professional Practice", measured the impact experiential education via on and off campus internships has on professional organizations (6, 8). In this study, Cuyler referenced the financial impact of internships over one academic year, which totaled \$36,625. Comparatively the work performed by these interns through the employment of thirty part time positions, and the cost to the host organization would be approximately \$226,000 (9). As the lines between

public and private partnerships blur new approaches toward training arts administrators should be explored in order to respond to a new cultural industry (Dewey, “Training Arts Administrators” 5, 7). Preparing HBCU students with both on-the-job training and relevant arts administration pedagogy, HBCUs can promote innovative, enterprising methods to address the diversity issue, build capacity within its own walls and respond to the demands the current multifaceted arts field necessitates (Martin 1).

The National Center for Education Statistics released a technical report in 2006 to determine, if any the economic impact of HBCUs upon their regional economies. Examining data from the National Center for Education and Statistics along with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, “The Impact of the Nation’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities” unequivocally illustrates that the presence of an HBCU within a community directly contributes to the economic vitality of the host community. Economic impacts were defined across four categories: wage and salaries spending by the institution, spending by the institution for expenditures outside of wage and salaries, undergraduate student spending, and graduate and professional student spending (Humphreys 14, 15, 16). For 2001, the total economic impact for the 101 HBCUs included in the study was 10.2 billion (Humphreys 19), the collective gross product was 6 billion, and the labor impact generated was 4 billion (Humphrey 21). HBCUs impact on employment produced 180, 142 full and part time jobs (Humphreys 21, 22). These findings are vital because it quantifies and therefore strengthens the argument that HBCUs contribution to the domestic and global workforce is unprecedented. HBCUs are essentially responsible for developing the black middle class.

The HBCU acts as a two-way portal positioned in the middle of the pipeline, constantly engaging in and promoting meaningful dialogue with K-12 education, which in time, funnels

into the HBCU for training and preparation. Once matriculated into the HBCU, students are engaged in arts administration pedagogy and practicum. Prior to graduation, students are connected with job sources and entrepreneurial opportunities in arts administration, which in turn can channel back into the community. Working together, both the HBCU and arts organization can employ African-American graduates to develop strategies to engage the arts at the local level to address deep-rooted or ongoing problems affecting African-American individuals and communities. The diversity gap in arts administration presents an enormous opportunity for HBCUs to get involved, assume a leadership role in the undertaking of this problem, and begin to close the breach that currently exists and continues to widen.

Looking through the lens of capacity building, nonprofit arts organizations, particularly small and mid-sized organizations with limited staff, rely on external partners to further their mission (Roberge et al. 12). Creating partnerships with HBCUs not only establishes shared leadership strategies and resources but also connects the nonprofit with a formal integrated structure and reciprocal pipeline for recruiting qualified candidates. For small to mid-sized organizations, capacity building efforts are often short-term, project-based grants. Evidence to evaluate capacity building is generally anecdotal, although not entirely inconclusive, lacking a standard measure or baseline for which outputs or outcomes can be measured. It is difficult to test the effectiveness of capacity building without a measurement tool. Further measurement would expand the knowledge base for identifying which tools are directly impacting the individual and organizational capacity building efforts. Building a sustainable organization requires a continual, purposeful strategy to acquire competent and skilled arts administrators (Dewey, "Training Arts Administrators 5).

#### The Role of Arts Organization as Program Operations Partner

One does not need to look too far to find African-American performing and visual artists from diverse backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses, both celebrated and renowned for their contributions to the arts. However, this does not translate to individuals working behind the scenes or in administrative capacities (Beckman 94, 96). In her essay “Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Arts Management: An Exposé and Guide”, Muslar states, “Demographics are predictably changing, but young African-Americans do not typically consider working in the arts a viable career path, and so they may get discouraged before they even begin”. The arts can be perceived as an elitist form of entertainment for people with greater means, despite considerable contributions from African-Americans on the stage. Low to moderate income students, in particular, may view the cost of attending a movie as exclusive.

Arts organizations continue to maintain the current dialogue that the lack of diversity within organizations, in particular among leadership positions, is inextricably related to the insufficient number of qualified and capable African-American candidates from which to recruit (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 101). Furthermore, arts organizations, which have adopted satisfactory recruitment efforts, practices, and policies, and which support diversity, continue to struggle with broadening their organization to include African-American arts administrators. The lack of African-American candidates and staff may suggest that emerging African-American arts administrators are in short supply, lacking interest in the field, or having inadequate formal arts education or experience (Stein 304).

Established through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and its Office of University Partnerships, \$7.4 million in grants were funded to HBCUs in 2010. This is significant because at the federal level HBCUs are being acknowledged for their significant impact on educating individuals in low-income, African-American communities. Arts

organizations serving in low to moderate income communities experience a unique set of challenges with their constituents—unemployment, affordable housing, and poverty. HBCUs and alumni are well-respected anchors in the communities (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development). Recognizing the challenges that small- to mid-sized arts organizations face in capacity and training, Bloomberg Philanthropies announced on September 15, 2015 a \$30 million unrestricted capacity building grant for a diverse cohort of 262 small and mid sized arts and cultural organizations. Grantees in six major cities, including Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, were funded through the Arts Innovation and Management program in an effort to strengthen capacity operations and management training on a national scale (Kaiser).

Diversification of the arts organization should not come by way of social engineering or more diverse candidate recruitment, but rather stems from a desire from individuals or groups to engage. If you build it, they still may not come. Arts organizations and arts administrators working to close the diversity gap should recognize the entrenched structural inequity that can exist within traditional business models, which imply ownership, move toward a collaborative business model, and favors access. What if board members were voted in by their constituency? What if technology was introduced to facilitate this practice? Often board members are sought after because of a high-ranking position, their ability to influence, or their ability to attract a network of professionals. These attributes are fiscally driven. What if arts organizations shifted from institutionalized ownership practices to shared access and inclusivity of power by their constituents' access through the use of data-based technology? The constituency, for example, rather than the existing board, would then be able to make recommendations for or elect board

members by voter selection. Therefore, accountability to constituents, rather than the wealth capacity of potential board members, would drive board recruiting.

Creating a climate of diversity includes moving beyond the inherent benefit of diversity in nonprofit arts organizations to adopting a socially just and equitable model. The model or standard is not simply a cosmetic cover-up but a complex, forward-moving, systematic approach rooted in theory and research that continually progresses over time (Roberge, Lewicki, and Hietapelto 12). African-American candidates who meet or exceed minimum hiring qualifications face additional hurdles and barriers, whether real or perceived. What constitutes a good hire? To succeed in today's workplace, graduates entering the workforce need a combination of applied knowledge, technology, communication, collaboration, and teamwork skills. In a report published by the Conference Board, "Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers' Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century U.S. Workforce", employers ranked the following skills for workplace readiness: Oral Communications 95.4%, Teamwork/Collaboration 94.4%, Professionalism/Work Ethic 93.8%, Written Communications 93.1%, and Critical Thinking/Problem Solving 92.1% (Conference Board 22–23).

Beyond the base qualifications of education, skills, and experience, how do recruiters determine which candidate is an ideal match for the organization (Stein 304)? Occupational opportunity structure and stereotypes are the undercurrent that can influence hiring decisions. To maintain the status quo of the dominant group of insiders, those within power control the influx of outsiders, whether knowingly or unknowingly. This concept is defined as the assumed characteristics theory. Individuals value, network with, and respect those with shared interests, background, culture, and education according to the complexity-extremity theory (Heneman,

Waldeck, and Cushnie 74). Homogenous groups are maintained and stereotypes developed when value is placed on likeness with an *in-group*. When individuals within homogenous in-groups place a higher value on their individual or collective attributes compared to a lower value with members of the *out-group*, homogenous groups maintain the status quo and perpetuate stereotypes, therefore creating a continuous pattern of low-level evaluation of the out-group. In order to create opportunities for African-Americans within a predominately white organizational structure, organizations should recognize what pre-existing values and assumptions are held within their policies, practices, and leadership criterion that uphold the dominant group.

Are the qualities and characteristics of white males preferred to those of women and minorities? Rejecting candidates based upon indiscernible benchmarks reinforces the occupational structure of the status quo by controlling the recruitment process so that ideal candidates are a mere duplication of the existing group in power. The expectancy-violation theory posits that in instances where group members demonstrate qualities, traits, and demeanors that are recognizably different (whether positive or negative), the further away these characteristics are from the norm of the dominant group, the greater the violation imposed on the individual exhibiting the characteristic (Stein 304).

For most African-Americans race is an identifiable characteristic, and can therefore be a barrier if the dominant homogenized group perceives the identifying trait as far from the norm. African-Americans can face barriers accessing, growing, and developing as leaders within arts organizations even if organizations have a diversity statement in place. African-American candidates respond to homogenous organizational culture in one or two ways. Either the individual subverts cultural identity or assimilates into the main group (Chelladurai and Doherty 285). To value diversity is simply holding the attitudinal position that diversity is a good thing.

Managing diversity is a shift or movement through behavior, indicating a willingness to embark on change regardless of the shift of transference of power and preservation (Lord, “Diversification as Disruption”).

Relying on a network of friends and colleagues is a generally accepted method for hiring staff (Nonprofit HR 12); however, this proven method can weaken an organization’s ability to recruit new and diverse talent. Nonprofits should prioritize diversity recruitment strategies that go beyond their existing networks. According to the “2015 Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey” results, smaller nonprofits can face recruitment challenges with no formal recruitment strategy or hiring department in place, unlike their larger counterparts. “While nonprofits are rebounding from the recession overall, they lack formal strategies in hiring and retaining talent. As a result, current challenges in these areas will be exacerbated” (Nonprofit HR 9). Further, limited budgetary and human resources can impede capacity-building (Roberge, Lewicki, Hietapelto, and Abdyldaeva 9, 12).

Research suggests that given an increased competition for jobs combined with an influx of millennials, hiring managers will need to find innovative recruiting strategies, and provide incentives to retain existing employees (Conference Board). Also, to remain competitive, organizations must be able to attract and retain exceptional candidates (Ehrhart and Ziegert 901). In support of this position, Jeremiah Owyang, founder of Crowd Companies, defines this collaborative or shared economy as “an economic model where technologies enable people to get what they need from each other rather than from centralized institutions.” (Maycotte) Central to this idea is that both Millennials and Big Data are powering this peer-to-peer business model. Consider Zipcar, Uber, and Airbnb—all adaptive, transformative, collaborative models, which are creative responses offering a new experience for how individuals engage with goods and

services. With demographic shifts toward an increase of African-Americans and the number of Millennials, and the integration of data into peer-to-peer business, can the arts community adjust for the new type of prospective, enterprising arts leaders?

An emerging or small arts organization can act, however, more fluidly to draw upon its social capital, strong volunteer base, and in-kind contributions. Nonprofit arts organizations can utilize social media tools, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter, to the fullest potential to disseminate new hire communications to engage African-American students, affinity groups, and professionals. Nonprofit arts organizations seeking professional staff and volunteers that represent communities that they serve are ideally positioned to recruit African-American candidates looking for opportunities to give back to, positively impact, and change their communities (Arminio, Carter, and Jones 503). Arts organizations should apply these findings to further investigate solutions in order to have a principal response to the imminent occupational gap. HBCUs have become educational anchors in the community, with high success rates for graduating African-American students and in preparing them to enter and exceed in the workforce. It is apparent that a partnership is vital for preparing African-American arts administrators to not only launch a meaningful career path in the nonprofit arts sector, but also contribute to the growth of the economy and resident community.

Arts organizations are not without risk when moving towards quantifying recruitment measurements, that is, moving from valuing diversity to managing diversity. They must consider the ramifications of redirecting their resources, both human and capital, to adjust for planning and implementing diversity practices. For most organizations this comes by way of diversity training by an outside consultant. In addition, arts organizations must consider communication barriers when diversifying. Deciphering implied or discernible messages through multiple

channels can be complex and problematic. Without the support of a professional consultant, some arts organizations are fearful of plotting uncharted territory. When an organization takes intentional and public steps to diversify, it stands at greater risk of succumbing to discriminatory practices. Simply put, the more diverse, or greater percentage of representative diversity, the more susceptible it is to liability. The 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace demands knowledge-based and transferable proficiencies and expertise. The individual employee is the greatest asset to an organization. With increased competition, no organization can afford not to make systematic efforts to attract a broad pool of diverse candidates.

Diversity must not begin or end with human resources, nor can diversity efforts be subverted by other traditionally-recognized priorities, or put on hold until the economy reboots, making a slow and lethargic turn towards diversity initiatives. It is not simply a quota to fulfill. In this manner, organizations can “value diversity” yet remain apathetic to change. Potential African-American candidates seeking a position in an arts organization where there is minimal if any representation of African-Americans or other persons of color may be deterred from accepting a position for fear of tokenism. In misguided organizations lacking in understanding of true diversity, a newly hired candidate may still face isolation in the workplace because of the lack of organizational change. Furthermore, African-American candidates that are relegated to entry-level positions with no clear career trajectory to executive positions are overlooked or less likely to be given an opportunity to lead projects that demonstrate leadership skills. Instead, diversity initiatives must seek out the greatest realized potential, productivity, and output of individuals, groups, teams, departments, and organizations as a whole, when aiming to achieve quantifiable diversity.

This is not to imply that the racial demographic of the organization is the only factor by which an African-American candidate would consider employment. However, it does suggest that representation is an indicator reflecting whether an organization has moved beyond valuing diversity to implementation. Therein lies the conundrum. A principal indicator in attracting African-American candidates is the presence of African-American candidates at entry, middle, and executive levels of the organization. Prospective candidates seeking employment investigate potential arts employers' online presence and social media networks to develop a sense of the organizational culture. If an arts organization cannot connect its diversity message to an implemented pathway to diversity, with measurable increases over time, it not only fails to uphold its diversity mission and reach its diversity goals, but also reinforces negative perceptions about how the organization values African-Americans.

Good intentions are ineffective in recruiting or retaining African-American candidates. Diversity interventions and diversity outcomes can be used to measure its impact against diversity benchmarks and standards. Bi-annual surveys of staff can identify concerns surrounding diversity and inclusiveness. Arts organizations should not make the assumption that job satisfaction can be measured by tenure. Economic downturn, job scarcity, and competitiveness are impediments to tendering employment. This is particularly true if the employee needs to gain additional skillsets to remain competitive in the marketplace. To that end, arts organizations can continue to measure diversity outcomes to evaluate and reevaluate their diversity strategies in order to create a logic model for planned implementation of a diversity pipeline with established standards.

Diversity critics would posit that diversity is just a subtle approach to promoting affirmative action in the workplace, holding the mistaken position that affirmative action

accommodates underperforming individuals. This argument is flawed. Cuyler asserts that not only can affirmative action be used as a framework for diversity, but also, when directed appropriately, can be a vehicle through which underrepresented groups, including, but not limited to African-Americans, can access the workforce, specifically areas that have been historically lacking in African-American representation (“Affirmative Action” 99). A second argument is affirmative action is forced integration. To expand this argument, opponents contend that affirmative action undermines meritocracy. Stated differently, recruitment efforts are confined to meeting quotas rather than selecting the best and brightest candidates for employment (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 99). While the increase in representation can be a goal, it does not necessarily reflect inclusivity (Danowitz, Edeltraud, and Heike 72). In order to propel arts organizations into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, those charged with creating a culture of inclusivity must advocate for the gains of diversity, not only within their existing organization but also for the field of arts administration (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 102). Rather than approaching diversity as a deficit, arts organizations should position their diversity commitment from the stance of added value or equity. At every level, consideration can be made on how to expand equity through the organization toward higher goals of inclusion rather than simply meeting a diversity quota. Diversity should not be an allocation distributed from one group to another but rather the progression of shared perspectives circulated throughout. To decrease the diversity gap, arts organizations should look for internal and external partnering opportunities.

Organizations may consider creating an Executive Fellows Program to mentor, develop, and retain emerging African-American arts administrators. Diversity competencies should be included in job descriptions, most notably for arts leadership positions. Human resources and other hiring professionals can incorporate diversity responsibilities in job descriptions to recruit

candidates with broadened cultural experiences. Onboarding and professional development opportunities can include diversity training. In order to be a qualified leader, those entering the workforce today must be able to effectively communicate, possess problem-solving competencies, and work within diverse groups (Cuyler, “Affirmative Action” 102). Arts organizations should engage higher education, business, and government leaders and institutions with shared interest in improving their constituents and communities to catalyze the diversity plan. Arts organizations seeking to increase the number of African-American candidates must do so with transparency that reflects their intentions. Recruitment theory suggests that individuals seeking employment not only consider their own personal values and preferences, but also reflect on the reputation of the prospective organization to which they are applying (Cuyler, “Career Paths” 32). If African-American candidates perceive that the staff and leadership of the arts organization do not reflect the community it serves nor is representative of a diverse workplace then they may perceive a disparity between their individual goals and the work environment (Ehrhart and Ziegert 902).

### The Role of the HBCU Graduate as Enterprising Partner

Using diversity as a framework, arts educators can proactively recruit current or potential students into arts administration programs. One factor to examine when recruiting students into the arts administration sector is the value offered by a career in the arts. For students, particularly those with one-parent households, financial aid is essential to considering higher education as a bridge to a viable career path. African-American students rely on both need and merit based scholarships, in addition to a comprehensive financial aid package, such as loans, scholarships, work-study, and fellowships.

First-generation students can have a significantly higher rate of poverty and fewer life experiences navigating through academic processes than colleagues whose parents or grandparents hold a college degree. In 2010, the Department of Education found that 50% of the populations of college students are first generation (United States Department of Education). Subsequently, first-generation students require significant support through the higher education admissions process and in realizing that higher education can be an achievable goal.

HBCUs have a strong reputation for establishing faculty-student relationships, and students attending HBCUS are more likely to participate in faculty research projects than African-American students attending PWIs (Clay 17). Despite the inequities in resources, HBCUs produce similar levels in academic outcomes. HBCUs act as an extended family for African-American students, providing social and emotional support as well as academic support. In comparison to PWIs, which graduate 63% of African-American students, HBCUs graduate 55% African-American students (Kim and Conrad 414).

Factors such as academic records and finances, while tangible, do not necessarily translate to academic success. Other more subtle factors, such as student self-discipline, motivation, or aspirations, are not as obvious yet can influence student achievement. HBCUs are integral in providing mentorships for African-American students where family involvement, or the lack thereof, can be a barrier to student aspirations (Bolden et al.). High school guidance counselors can also play an important role in pointing first generation African-American students to HBCUs where more lenient admission criteria increases the opportunity for lower performing students to gain admission to college. One could argue that PWIs can provide similar, if not greater, support given their healthier endowments, improved facilities, and superior faculty. HBCUs have demonstrated that their measure of success, despite these deficiencies, lies within

the attention to the consistently purposeful care, attention, nurturing, and affirmation of the individual student (Hale 45). HBCUs exist to preserve and advance the culture of African-Americans despite systematic legal exclusion of African-Americans from education. Providing a culture of inclusivity, each HBCU charter has its unique mission statement with its message of inclusivity wrapped within the following tenants: fostering leadership, education of the whole person, communication, oral and written, value of liberal education, knowledge and appreciation of different cultures, service to community, and moral and spiritual values (Hale 48). Hale expresses the enduring impact HBCUs have beyond educating students:

The accomplishments of Black colleges have been essential to the social, moral, humanitarian, and economic development of our country. Traditionally, revered institutions of higher learning were created in the seat of wealth and literary enlightenment. HBCU's, however, built themselves up from the muck and mire of poverty, illiteracy, opposition, and the vestiges of war. It is perhaps the honorable spirit of that struggle that continues to guide HBCU's and keeps them on track toward their mission to give young African-Americans access to higher education when they otherwise might not have an opportunity. It is nearly impossible to overstate the educational, political and social contributions of historically Black colleges. With continued and increased support of alumni, foundations, corporations, and individual donors it is equally impossible to overstate the possibilities for HBCU's and their students. (Hale 94)

Can arts organizations genuinely serve the public if their staff does not represent the constituency it serves? Engaging within a community of color is not necessarily the same as equitable exchange. Offering culturally inclusive programming does suggest moving beyond

valuing diversity; however, if organizations continue to dictate what should be presented or if services are extended into the communities while they systematically ignore or deprive individuals a voice in the process, they reinforce the notion that “we know what is best for you.”

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education produced its report *Measuring Up* that identifies five factors that act as barriers to higher education: preparation, participation, completion, affordability, and benefits. Inherent to HBCUs is the ability to create an environment that fosters self-confidence, leadership development, and inclusivity, which is key to student retention (Davis 148). The author challenges the accepted rhetoric embraced by arts organizations in his statement, “As long as HBCUs continue to produce African-American graduates, other institutions will be discouraged from ignoring the talent pool.” (Bolden et al.) Diversity must be approached from both sides of the fence. The role and responsibility must not solely be that of the arts organization that, like the HBCU, can be underfunded and under-resourced. Hale asserts:

For the foreseeable future, HBCUs will be compelled to continue to be the major developers of the African-American talent pool as they simultaneously provide opportunities for others. The HBCUs’ contribution to America is phenomenal, especially when one considers how limited support of them has been. (Hale 49)

Hale references a 2002 study by the United Negro College Fund, which found that slightly more than 60% of faculty at HBCUs were African-American—33% male and 29% female. These findings suggest that diversity is recognized as integral to the HBCU experience and that non-African-American faculty can enable student success in like manner as their African-American colleagues. This not only dispels the argument that African-American students stand to benefit only under the guidance of African-American faculty, but also dismisses

the argument that HBCUs' homogenous student and faculty population does not adequately prepare African-American students for the real world. HBCUs, albeit generally more limited in financial and physical resources, graduate about the same percentage of African-American students as those attending predominately white institutions (PWIs), which suggests that contributing factors to academic achievement, such as faculty/student relationships, alumni network, and extended family, are relevant to a positive African-American experience (Kim and Conrad 421).

## Chapter V CONCLUSION

Quantifiable increases in diversity in both professional and volunteer leadership positions in nonprofit arts organizations can be achieved if Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) increase the readiness of African-American students to enter the field of arts administration and prepare them for advancement within the organization. These findings suggest that unless reversed, the education gap will directly attribute to a greater underrepresentation of African-Americans in the arts administration field. HBCUs with fine arts, humanities, and business programs, or arts administration coursework, in cooperation with career support services, can work toward developing arts administration programs that can serve as incubators to develop, strengthen, and foster African-American students to enter the field of arts administration with leadership proficiencies. HBCUs can serve as a conduit for the preparation and advancement of emerging African-American students by facilitating the transition between college and the workplace. Therefore, HBCUs can continuously strengthen and build capacity in nonprofit arts organization, thus systematically decreasing the diversity gap by producing a quantifiable pipeline of diversified talent in the nonprofit arts sector.

Strategic alliances and models of implementation for HBCUs and the arts and cultural sector to adopt large scale meaningful solutions and measuring tools to annually report on diversity pipeline goals will provide quantifiable data by which outcomes and outputs can be measured. HBCUs serve as a point of entry for emerging student leaders. Research prevails with a number of studies indicating early exposure to arts education is a strong indicator that students

will discover and develop a deeper appreciation for observing, participating, or supporting the arts. African-American students in the low to moderate economic scale attending secondary schools with inferior conditions and programs are more likely to be deprived of robust arts education in school-based or out-of-school programs.

Although literature supports the HBCU as having been the gateway to higher education for African-Americans, more recently HBCUs have faced harsh criticism from opponents who question their relevance and existence (Jewell and Allen 246). Challenges in funding, changing enrollments, and accreditation have left many HBCUs vulnerable (Jewell and Allen 257). In 2011, the US Department of Education tightened its credit requirements for Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), abruptly leaving thousands of families without any other means to pay for their students' education, even though they had relied on funding in the previous year. The resulting impact thrust many HBCUs into a financial crisis and mounting debt from which they are still recovering. Enrollment in HBCUs declined the following year, 2012–2013, the largest decline found among first-year students. Similar federal changes imposed on student household income and term limits for receiving the Pell Grant made previously eligible students ineligible. HBCUs with reduced resources, smaller endowments than PWIs, and weak fundraising efforts, struggle to make up the difference in operating funds as the majority of their budget is derived from tuition. Enrollment decline due to African-American students choosing to attend PWIs, means funding dollars tied to enrollment have declined. The imbalance of per student federal and state government funding on financially strapped HBCUs has placed these institutions at risk for losing their accreditation status (Kim 392). Therefore, the perceived risks in investing in HBCUs pose a greater liability. To that end, critics remain cautious about the outlook of HBCUs.

Historically resource-deficient in comparison to PWIs, HBCUs have remained a treasured anchor serving the African-American community. Continually impacting the development of the African-American middle class, HBCUs serve as an incubator and springboard for successfully educating and graduating African-American leaders (Jewell and Allen 244).

The significance and accountability of HBCUs to equip and develop underrepresented arts administrators to fill the need for diverse leaders in arts organizations, is an extension of their mission and the reason for their existence. HBCUs consistently continue to welcome, equip, and cultivate African-American leadership. The liability of homogeneity in human and intellectual capital, perspective, and voice should motivate arts administrators and educators to address the diversity leadership crisis that is before us. Solving the diversity issue has been for the most part the burden of the arts organization. If organizations attempt to diversify, they do so with the understanding that a certain amount of risk is involved. Not everyone will embrace change. Creating a culture of diversity is not simply transactional but also cyclical and relational, and requires ongoing commitment.

HBCUs are poised to offer an equitable contribution to not only challenge the diversity issue, but also to fully assume their role and responsibility in preparing future African-American leaders and create a pipeline of qualified candidates to enter and develop in the field of arts administration. The findings in this paper emphasize the need to engage both HBCUs and the arts and culture sector to create a standardized metric for quantifying diversity within the arts administration sector.

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