

2026 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 21

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH. Recognizes Tuesday, March 17, 2026, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To recognize Tuesday, March 17, 2026, as Historically Black Colleges and Universities
3 (HBCU) Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

4 WHEREAS, Louisiana is proud to be home to eight Historically Black Colleges and
5 Universities that play a pivotal role in expanding educational opportunity, strengthening
6 communities, and preparing generations of leaders who contribute to the economic, cultural,
7 and civic vitality of the state; and

8 WHEREAS, since their establishment nearly two centuries ago, HBCUs have stood
9 as enduring symbols of resilience, opportunity, and excellence, opening doors to higher
10 education and cultivating generations of scholars, leaders, innovators, and public servants
11 whose contributions continue to enrich Louisiana, the nation, and the world; and

12 WHEREAS, HBCUs not only transform lives but also strengthen the economy and
13 workforce, aligning academic programs with the evolving needs of society and preparing
14 graduates who excel as scientists, doctors, educators, artists, lawyers, judges, engineers,
15 entrepreneurs, public servants, and community leaders whose impact resonates across every
16 sector of society; and

17 WHEREAS, this tradition of excellence, leadership, and service is powerfully
18 embodied in the life of Dr. Norman C. Francis, an Xavier University of Louisiana graduate

1 who went on to integrate Loyola University New Orleans College of Law; and

2 WHEREAS, Dr. Francis provided over fifty-eight years of service to Xavier
3 University and forty-seven as president of the university, having the distinction of becoming
4 one of the longest serving university presidents in the nation, and through his visionary
5 leadership, unwavering dedication, and commitment to transforming Xavier into a national
6 model of higher education, he pursued the university's mission by shaping generations of
7 scholars, health professionals, and civic leaders and by expanding access, fostering growth,
8 and advancing academic excellence for students across Louisiana and the nation; and

9 WHEREAS, Louisiana's HBCUs have distinguished themselves, both nationally and
10 in the state, in numerous ways including:

11 **Dillard University** continues its longstanding tradition of academic excellence and
12 national competitiveness, with the university's nationally recognized Honda Campus All-Star
13 Challenge team advancing, for the third consecutive year, to the 2025 National
14 Championship Tournament in Los Angeles, a premier academic quiz competition that
15 celebrates scholarship and teamwork. The university recently received a nineteen million
16 dollar gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, the largest private donation in the
17 university's history, to support student success, scholarships, and institutional advancement;

18 **Grambling State University** remains a pillar of opportunity and leadership in
19 Louisiana, advancing academic innovation through the establishment of the state's first PhD
20 program in Criminology and Justice Administration, while celebrating a proud legacy of
21 achievement marked by one hundred years of Tiger Athletics and one hundred years of the
22 World Famed Tiger Marching Band;

23 **Southern University and A&M College**, the flagship institution of the Southern
24 University System and a Carnegie Research 2 institution, continues more than one hundred
25 forty-six years of leadership in higher education and while opening a forty-eight million
26 dollar state-of-the-art STEM complex and Global Innovation and Welcome Center, and
27 celebrating the internationally recognized "Human Jukebox" Marching Band which was
28 named ESPN's Band of the Year for 2025;

29 **Southern University Law Center** continues to expand access to justice and
30 experiential legal education through the construction of a new Clinical Legal Education

1 Building, strengthening opportunities for students while enhancing legal services for the
2 Baton Rouge community;

3 **Southern University at New Orleans**, celebrating seventy years of excellence and
4 service to the Greater New Orleans community, recently hosted the first-ever
5 Egyptian-commissioned replica King Tutankhamun exhibition at a historically black college
6 or university and celebrated the SUNO Men's Basketball Team for capturing the 2026
7 HBCU Athletic Conference Tournament Championship, its first conference title since 2012;

8 **Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center** continues to
9 advance agricultural innovation and workforce development as the only historically black
10 college or university selected as a site for the United States Department of Agriculture's
11 Agricultural Research Service laboratory and also provides hands-on learning through
12 programs such as its Viticulture and Enology research vineyard, and the VET Explore
13 program preparing future veterinarians;

14 **Southern University at Shreveport** continues to strengthen workforce development
15 and community impact in North Louisiana through the Aerospace Technology Center, which
16 serves as the region's premier training hub for aviation technicians, while advancing
17 entrepreneurship through the Roy Griggs School of Business, and expanding community
18 partnerships, including a re-entry workforce training initiative with the Caddo Parish
19 Sheriff's Office;

20 **Xavier University of Louisiana** continues its legacy of academic excellence
21 established under the leadership of Dr. Norman C. Francis and remains a national leader in
22 preparing students for careers in health professions the university ranks among the nation's
23 leading producers of African-American undergraduates who go on to complete medical
24 school, and is one of the top producers of African-American Doctor of Pharmacy graduates,
25 and contributes significantly to the educational, cultural, and economic vitality of the state
26 of Louisiana; and

27 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend Louisiana's Historically Black Colleges
28 and Universities for their outstanding achievements and their numerous alumni for
29 contributions to their local communities, the state of Louisiana, and the world as a whole.

30 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana

