

Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Marching to the Beat of Freedom

Have you ever heard of the term HBCU?

It stands for Historically Black College and University. They are schools that opened to teach Black students beginning in the 1800s. In the 1800s, most HBCUs started as schools where students learned a trade or trained to be teachers. These schools also played an important role in the fight for racial justice.

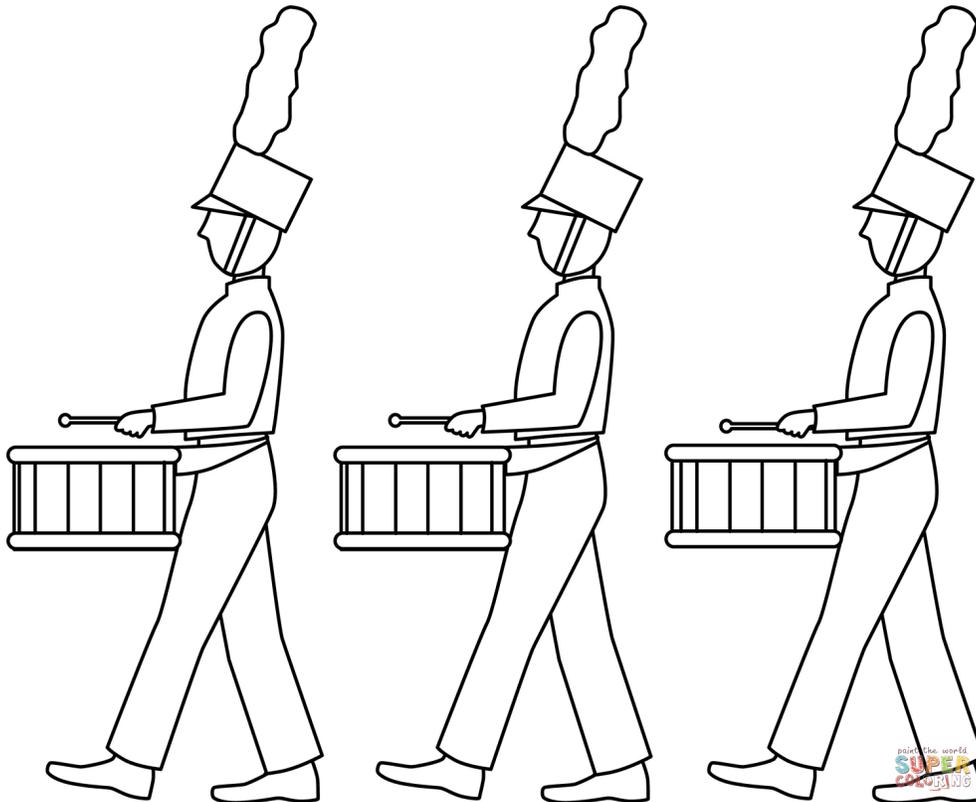


In total, there are 107 HBCUs in the United States. North Carolina has been home to 12 HBCUs, and 11 are still open today. Shaw University in Raleigh is the oldest in the South. HBCUs in North Carolina are well-known for their contributions to social justice movements. Students from Bennett College and North Carolina A&T in Greensboro were a part of the sit-in movement at the Greensboro Woolworth lunch counter in 1960. This movement helped bring an end to separating people based on their race at lunch counters. Many HBCU students also participated in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. They worked with students from nearby Black high schools to launch local protests. Their protests helped make North Carolina more equal for all people.

HBCUs continue to help African Americans today. One way is through music, especially with their marching bands. Marching bands entertain and show the value of hard work. In the picture above, we see Drum Major Marcus Newsome from Elizabeth City State University. Newsome led the band to New York City and was featured leading the Marching Vikings in a New York Jets half-time show on December 4, 1973 in Shea Stadium. Fayetteville State University's band, "The Marching Bronco Express," works with younger musicians, and their performances bring people together.

What issues do you think are important to students today?

What instrument would you want to play in a marching band and why?



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