

Sponsorship / Partnership

HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Program continues its partnership with Virginia State University's Women's LeadHERship Institute for its second annual "A Day in LeadHERship" conference on March 27, 2025, at the Gateway Dining & Event Center. The event, recognizing Women's History Month, featured discussions to inspire and empower Willa B. Player at VSU, fostering collaboration and idea exchange to cultivate future leaders.



Anne Mullen Orrell
CHARITABLE TRUST



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HBCU Executive Leadership Institute



Willa B. Players Leaders Program

Clark Atlanta University

Our Mission: The goal of the Willa B. Player Program (WLP) is to provide Willa B. Player with the knowledge, skills, and support to fully actualize an effective and successful leadership experience, while also ensuring the self-care practices needed to be mentally and physically resilient.



CAU HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Executive Leaders Program

The CAU HBCU Executive Leadership Institute (ELI) Willa B. Player Executive Leaders Program (WBP) is an initiative crafted to fortify leadership in higher education. Named in honor of Dr. Willa B. Player - the trailblazing president of Bennett College who led the institution to groundbreaking accreditation and championed human rights causes—the program offers immersive leadership, mentorship, and strategic development resources to new and experienced executive leaders shaping the future of education and community progress.

Built upon ELI's 13 leadership competencies and focusing on wellness practices, the program's robust curriculum undergirds participants capacity to lead with vision, resilience, and cultural stewardship with an emphasis on supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Meet The Team



Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, PhD.
HBCU ELI Executive Director &
18th President, Bennett College



Juliette B. Bell, PhD.
HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Program Coordinator &
15th President, University of Maryland Eastern Shore



Ms. Tye Andrews
Program Manager
HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Program



Ms. Betelihem Beshir
Research & Data Clerk
HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Program

Our Program Group Coaching

The Willa B. Player Program provides group coaching session with key content experts who focus on leadership and development, crisis awareness and mental, physical and emotional health among others.

Impact of Federal Regulations on Higher Education

Understand how Federal regulations significantly shape higher education by influencing funding, compliance requirements, and institutional policies aimed at accountability and student protection.

Strengthening Board Relations

Enhancing communication and collaboration between institutional leadership and the board to support strategic governance.

Understanding Athletic-Winning the Game

Exploring the role of athletics in higher education and strategies for achieving competitive and institutional success.

Session Planning and Next Steps

Outlining actionable steps and priorities to implement insights and goals discussed during the session.

June Residency

The June Residency is a two day residency that will take place on Clark Atlanta University's Campus June 9, 2025 through June 10, 2025. The Residency will consist of two days of professional development workshops and a restorative wellness retreat.

Please scan to view the
HBCU ELI's Competency
Framework



Group Coaches



Dr. Shirley M. Malcom
Senior Advisor and Director SEA
Change

at the American Association for the
Advancement of Science (AAAS)



Dr. Colette Burnett
Colette Pierce Burnette, EdD

President Emerita, Huston - Tillotson
University



Dr. Phyllis Worthy Dawkins
HBCU ELI Executive Director

18th President, Bennett College



Roslyn Clark Artis, JD, EdD
14th President and CEO

Benedict College



Dr. Dwaun J. Warmack
9th President

Clafin University



Dr. Lester C. Newman
President Emeritus

Jarvis Christian University

Day One: Monday, June 8, 2026

11 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Location: Signia Hotel, 5th Floor

Registration and Lunch on Campus

- Moderator: Dr. Juliette B. Bell, ELI Willa B. Player Executive Leaders Program Coordinator
- Facilitator: Dr. Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, ELI Executive Director
- (Need to include transport from Embassy Suites to Signia Hotel: 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM)

12:00 P.M.

LUNCH at Signia (4th Floor)

1:00 P.M.

Welcome and Introductions –



Dr. Juliette Bell
Moderator



Dr. Phyllis Dawkins
Facilitator



**Dr. Tashion
Macon**



1:15 P.M.

Emotional Intelligence: Interactive Coaching Session



Dr. Marsha Scragg

2:00 – 3:30 P.M.

Group 1: Wellness Spa Treatment (Select 2 from Signia Express Massage, Express Facials, or Mani/Pedi)

Group 2: Interactive Coaching Session: ‘The Well Within: Reclaiming Our Inner Overflow’ (Dr. Macon)

3:30 – 5:00 PM

Group 1: Interactive Coaching Session: ‘The Well Within: Reclaiming Our Inner Overflow’ (Dr. Macon)

Group 2: Wellness Spa Treatment (Select 2 from Signia Express Massage, Express Facials, or Mani/Pedi)

5:00-5:30 PM

Wrap-Up – Moderator, Facilitator, and Dr. Macon

6:30-8:00 P.M.

Dinner & Celebration of Leadership Signia Hotel 4th floor

(Bus transportation to Embassy Suites by Hilton Atlanta at Centennial Olympic Park at 8:45 p.m.)



Introducing the HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Executive Leaders



Dr. Cynthia Anthony
President
Lawson State Community College



Dr. Gina S. Brown
President
Oakwood University



Dr. LaTania Collins Smith
President
Harris-Stowe State University



Dr. Melissa Frank-Alston
President
Augusta Technical College



Dr. Safiya George
President
University of the Virgin Islands



Dr. Aubra Grantt,
Chancellor
Southern University Shreveport



Introducing the HBCU ELI Willa B. Player Executive Leaders



Dr. Teresa Hardee
Interim President
Bennett College



Dr. Ruth Jackson
President
Langston University



Ms. Marva Johnson, J.D.
President
Florida A&M University



Dr. Denise Jones Gregory
Interim President
Jackson State University



Dr. Tomika LeGrande
President
Prairie View A&M University



Dr. Pamela Richardson Wilks
President
Clinton College



Day One: Tuesday, June 9, 2026

8:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library

6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. Presidents reception
CAU Museum of Arts

8:00 A.M. & 8:30 A.M.

Transport from Embassy Suites by Hilton Atlanta at Centennial Olympic Park Hotel to AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library

Registration and Lunch on Campus

- Program Sessions on CAU campus
 - Moderator: Dr. Juliette B. Bell, ELI Willa B. Player Executive Leaders Program Coordinators
 - Facilitator: Dr. Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, ELI Executive Director
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9:00 A.M - 9:15 A.M.

Welcome and Opening Remarks



Dr. Juliette Bell
Moderator



Dr. Phyllis Dawkins
Facilitator



9:15 A.M.

Empowering Women Leaders at HBCUs



Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum
President Emerita
Spelman College

10:00 A.M.

Professional Development for Women Leaders



Dr. Gloria D. Thomas
President
HERS Institute for Women

10:50 A.M.

Break

11:00 A.M.

Cultivating Donors & Funding the Future



Dr. Marguerite McClinton Stoglin
Senior VP & Philanthropic Strategist
Bank of America

11:45 AM

Wrap-up and Closing Remarks



12:30 – 2:30

Keynote Luncheon session

Robert W. Woodruff Library

Dr. Johnetta Cole

5:45 P.M.

**Bus transportation from Embassy Suites by
Hilton Atlanta at Centennial Olympic Park.**

6:00 PM

**Presidents reception CAU Museum of Arts
(optional)**



