

Powering Opportunity: Philanthropic Partnerships & Programs

Bold, targeted initiatives and partnerships that mobilize capital, talent, and technology will expand economic mobility, build workforce pathways, and broaden access to education and AI. Learn how you can join the solution to support college affordability, small-business financing, career pipelines, and STEM education.

SUPPORTING COLLEGE STUDENTS: Student Freedom Initiative (SFI)

Student loan debt in the United States currently exceeds \$1.7 trillion, which causes 45% of Black graduates to delay buying a home. SFI helps students attending HBCUs, MSIs and TCUs to pursue higher education with less debt and greater economic mobility. SFI supports affordable financing, academic support, and career opportunities for students and graduates, while simultaneously strengthening the educational institutions themselves. Every \$100 million raised enables 100 students per year in perpetuity.

On Thursday, March 26, 2026, in Atlanta, Georgia, Live Nation Urban and Student Freedom Initiative are coming together for AWARE FEST, a concert and nationwide call to action to raise awareness and funds for these programs. The events will culminate with a concert featuring Earth, Wind, & Fire, John Legend, Jill Scott, and several others. Supported by Gilead, Wells Fargo, and McDonald's.

Contact Keith Shoates (kshoates@studentfreedominitiative.org) to learn how to get involved.



ENABLING SMALL BUSINESSES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH: Southern Communities Initiative (SCI)

Half of all Black Americans live in just six southern cities in the United States, where they have limited access to wealth-building opportunities. In collaboration with founding partners BCG, PayPal, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and Vista Equity Partners, SCI is modernizing the technology, data, and operating capabilities of Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) to expand their lending capacity to small businesses. This will unlock exponential economic growth by increasing investment, job creation, and wealth-building in historically underserved communities.

Contact Jahi Wise (jahi@southerncommunitiesinitiative.com) to learn how to get involved.



CREATING PATHWAYS TO CAREERS: Fund II Foundation & internXL



Fund II Foundation advances long-term economic mobility by strengthening pathways from education to employment. Guided by its Cradle to Greatness framework, the Foundation focuses on scalable solutions that prepare individuals to participate fully in the modern workforce.

internXL is a workforce development platform supported by the Foundation that connects high-achieving students with paid internships, certifications, and professional development at leading companies. With more than 1,000 corporate partners, internXL helps employers broaden access to talent while building durable, inclusive pipelines for the future of work.

Contact Ivana Jackson (ljackson@fund2foundation.org) to learn how to get involved.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR AI FUTURE: Code.org



Artificial intelligence is anticipated to disrupt millions of jobs for already-underrepresented groups across a range of sectors. Inclusive AI efforts focus on ensuring that technological advancements expand opportunity rather than deepen existing gaps.

Key efforts include strengthening AI and computer science education across K-12 and higher education (particularly at HBCUs), expanding access to compute and capital, and building workforce on-ramps through internships and training. Partnerships with organizations such as code.org help introduce foundational AI and computer science skills at scale, connecting future talent to the tools shaping tomorrow's growth.

Contact Hadi Partovi (hadi@code.org) to learn how to join dozens of corporate partners in this work.

LEAD BOLDLY: Lessons for Business Leaders from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Lead Boldly: Seven Principles from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., written by Robert F. Smith (Founder, Chairman and CEO, Vista Equity Partners), examines Dr. King's unfinished work on economic opportunity in the United States. Through history, personal reflection and practical insight, Lead Boldly provides business leaders with specific ways to turn values into actions. It offers a framework for building shared prosperity through economically-additive approaches to leadership, investment, and decision-making.

Contact info@robertsmith.com if you are interested in learning more or sharing the book with your leadership team.