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## **Power to Decide Launches New Initiative to Support HBCU Student Success Through Sexual and Reproductive Health**

Today, Power to Decide announced [a new initiative](#) to empower young adults through student-led peer education and support at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

HBCU students are [invited to apply](#) to be student ambassadors, who will collaborate with Power to Decide to launch an awareness campaign around sexual and reproductive health and to help their peers access free or low-cost birth control. Students who are selected as ambassadors will receive ongoing coaching and support from Power to Decide, as well as a stipend.

“Nearly three-quarters of HBCUs are located in states where abortion access has been either banned or severely restricted, and where contraceptive access was already difficult,” said Power to Decide Senior Director of Health Equity, [JeNeen Anderson](#). “However, given their long, proud legacy of education, leadership and service, HBCUs are well-positioned to address the gaps for students in those regions where such ‘contraceptive deserts’ are growing, and reproductive health care is becoming even harder to access.”

Research finds that:

- Of the 107 institutions recognized as HBCUs by the U.S. Department of Education, nearly three-quarters are in states that have banned or severely restricted abortion access. These 72 schools enroll more than 166,000 students.
- Although HBCUs represent only 3% of U.S. colleges and universities, they enroll 10% of all Black students, 64% of whom are women.
- Access to quality reproductive health information and affordable birth control is essential to ensure that young people can finish their education and decide when, whether and under what circumstances to start a family.

This initiative also aims to advance a culture of reproductive well-being, an innovative framework centered on the belief that every person should have equitable access to the information, services, systems and support they need to have control over their bodies, and to make their own decisions related to sexuality and reproduction throughout their lives.

“Power to Decide envisions a culture in which there is a system of support that makes it possible for every person—no matter where they live—to achieve reproductive well-being,” said Power to Decide CEO [Raegan McDonald-Mosley](#), MD, MPH. “We look forward to collaborating with HBCU students and schools to break down some of the unique barriers to reproductive well-being that young Black adults face today.”

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*[Power to Decide](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works to advance sexual and reproductive well-being for all by providing trusted information, expanding access to quality services, and catalyzing culture change.*