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## **Maryland Public Television Continues National Celebration of HBCU Week with New Programming in Fall 2025**

*Eight short films and a prime-time documentary on PBS anchor a slate of additional programming for the HBCU Week NOW content initiative, a public media partnership of local PBS stations*

*The HBCU Week NOW Student Film Festival will premiere in January 2026*

**OWINGS MILLS, MD** – Maryland Public Television (MPT) today announced the continued national celebration of HBCU Week, recognizing the history and legacy of Historically Black Colleges and Universities through its national programming initiative, HBCU Week NOW. A dynamic lineup of eight new short films will premiere on the project's signature YouTube channel beginning in September.

The new short films produced by a partnership of PBS stations will join 10 others released over the past two years and will begin premiering in mid-September to coincide with the HBCU Week observance. These films will be produced by MPT, Howard University Television, PBS North Carolina, Louisiana Public Broadcasting, WABE (Atlanta), South Carolina ETV, Alabama Public Television, and WXXI (Rochester, N.Y.).

With a focus on the fine and performing arts, the new films will showcase Southern University's jazz program, Spelman College's Glee Club, Miles College's award-winning Purple Marching Machine marching band, the fashion arts program at North Carolina A&T State University (NC A&T) and North Carolina Central University (NCCU), and the Department of Theatre Arts at Howard University.

In partnership with Black Public Media, MPT will also debut The HBCU Week NOW Student Film Festival in January 2026, featuring a selection of 10 original short-format projects. The films are selected from submissions by HBCU students, curated by Black Public Media and showcased on the HBCU Week NOW YouTube channel.

MPT is also presenting new programs for television broadcast by PBS stations nationwide. This effort is anchored by the primetime national broadcast of the documentary *Becoming Thurgood: America's Social Architect*, about the life and work of former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. The one-hour

film premieres on PBS on September 9 and continues to air across the country, and will be available to stream free of charge at [hbcuweeknow.com](http://hbcuweeknow.com), [PBS.org](http://PBS.org), and via the [PBS app](#). Additional information about the film, along with a suite of standards-aligned classroom learning materials, screening activities and resources, and other materials, will be available shortly on the film's educational website.

"With HBCU Week NOW in its third year, we have significantly expanded our storytelling footprint while continuing to celebrate Historically Black Colleges and Universities as unique and cherished national resources," said Travis E. Mitchell, MPT senior vice president and chief content officer and Morgan State University graduate. "We are grateful for the support and collaboration of dozens of HBCUs and their students, faculty, and leadership as we continue to grow this important project."

Launched by MPT as a national project in 2023, HBCU Week NOW's growth is supported by an investment from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) for 2024 and 2025, along with funding from MPT's [Center for Maryland History Films](#) and [Morgan State University](#).

Led by MPT, the national project is an outgrowth of the statewide public TV network's regional HBCU Week celebration. Now in its sixth consecutive year, MPT's local celebration will provide some 30 hours of HBCU content to viewers in the mid-Atlantic region during the week of September 8-14. More information about MPT's 2025 HBCU Week lineup is available at [mpt.org/hbcu](http://mpt.org/hbcu).

"As MPT continues to shine a national spotlight on the enduring contributions of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Morgan State University is proud to stand in support. HBCU Week not only honors our rich legacy but also amplifies the voices and talents of a new generation of students whose stories deserve to be seen, heard, and celebrated," said David K. Wilson, president of Morgan State University. "This initiative underscores the transformative role HBCUs portray in shaping leaders, advancing knowledge, and expanding opportunity across our nation."

Congress defines an HBCU as "any historically Black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans ..." Today, some 100 HBCUs continue to deliver on the promise of their founding, with more than 285,000 students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds currently enrolled, along with at least 1million alumni from all walks of life. HBCUs are among America's most crucial institutions for providing access to higher education for generations of Americans from diverse backgrounds, including some of today's most notable individuals such as former U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, Oprah Winfrey, Dr. David Satcher, Samuel L. Jackson, and many others.

"We offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone at CPB for its support of this groundbreaking project," added Mitchell. "Among public media's most important roles is to bring the rich tapestry that is the American story to households across the country."

### **September and October National Television Broadcasts:**

Leading into the PBS premiere of *Becoming Thurgood: America's Social Architect*, WORLD, public television's leading national digital channel, will broadcast a lineup of HBCU-themed programs to

complement the documentary. The block will air on WORLD beginning at 7 p.m. on September 8 and again at 12 and 8 a.m. on September 9. Programs that aired in the block are:

- *Opportunity, Access & Uplift: The Evolving Legacy of HBCUs*
- *The Historic HBCU Photograph*
- *Roadtrip Nation: Thriving – Black Men in Higher Education 101*
- *Roadtrip Nation: Thriving – Black Men in Higher Education 102*
- *The Golden Year: Howard Women's Basketball*

WORLD will also re-broadcast Becoming Thurgood on Friday, September 12, at 9 p.m. To check your local listings and discover other HBCU-related content on WORLD, visit [worldchannel.org/schedule](http://worldchannel.org/schedule).

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### **About Maryland Public Television**

Maryland Public Television (MPT) is a statewide, public-supported TV network and Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) member offering entertaining and educational content delivered by traditional broadcasting and streaming on TVs, computers, and mobile devices via its [online video player](#) and the [free PBS app](#). A state agency operating under the auspices of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission, MPT also produces local, regional, and national programming and frequently earns regional Emmy® awards for its work. MPT's commitment to educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is delivered through its [Maryland Center for Media Literacy & Education](#) and [Thinkport.org](#). MPT's year-round community engagement activities connect viewers with resources covering a wide range of topics. More information is available at [mpt.org](http://mpt.org).

### **About The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)**

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation authorized by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,500 locally managed and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television, and related online services. For more information, visit [cpb.org](http://cpb.org), follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn, and subscribe for other updates.

### **About WORLD**

WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and programming. WORLD's original series examine the issues and amplify the voices of those often ignored by mainstream media. The multi-platform channel helps audiences understand conflicts, movements and cultures from around the globe. Its original work has won a Peabody Award, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, an International Documentary Association Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award, two Webby Awards and many others honoring diversity of content and makers. WORLD is carried by 194 member stations in markets representing 77% of US TV households. Funding for WORLD is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. WORLD is produced by GBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT). Find out more at [WORLDChannel.org](http://WORLDChannel.org).

**About Black Public Media**

Black Public Media (BPM) develops, produces, funds, and distributes media content about the African American and global Black experience. Black Public Media supports the development of visionary content creators and distributes stories about the global Black experience to engage audiences and inspire a more equitable and inclusive future.