



Getty Images and Ancestry Partner to Digitally Preserve Historic Archives of HBCUs

April 28, 2025

Ancestry will work with HBCUs to preserve their historical documents and rarely seen photography

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NEW YORK, April 28, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Getty Images](#) (NYSE: GETY), a preeminent global visual content creator and marketplace, has announced a first-of-its-kind genealogy-focused partnership with [Ancestry](#), the global leader in family history. As part of Getty Images' [HBCU Grants Program](#), this initiative will focus on the digital preservation and accessibility of historical documents, records and the photographic archives of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Once digitized, these invaluable archives will become searchable on Ancestry websites, helping millions of people discover and connect with the rich legacy of HBCUs.

Working alongside Getty Images, Ancestry will collaborate with participating HBCUs to identify and digitize documents, such as newsletters, newspapers, bulletins, student records, school catalogues, yearbooks, directories, and photographs that are critical for digital preservation. These efforts extend an essential resource to HBCUs beyond imagery, ensuring the protection of invaluable intellectual property and proper metadata application.

Cassandra Illidge, Vice President of Global Partnerships and Executive Director of the HBCU Grants Program at Getty Images, said: "Since its launch in 2021, the HBCU Grants Program has primarily focused on preserving photography. However, during our visits to partner institutions, we recognized that our scope should be broader. Vital records and historical documents also need attention, as they significantly contribute to the important legacy of HBCUs. Our partnership with Ancestry enhances our commitment to preserving the valuable history of HBCUs and increases access, visibility, and awareness of untold stories for a global audience. By connecting students, alumni, and institutions through genealogy, we aim to create richer context for historical research and foster a deeper understanding of family history."

Through the program, HBCUs retain full copyright ownership to their print and digitized assets and data. Ancestry will contract directly with each HBCU and work collaboratively to digitize selected materials on-site. All digital files will be delivered to the HBCUs, and complimentary, campus-wide access to Ancestry's platform will be provided, allowing students and faculty to explore and share their family histories and search millions of primary sources available on Ancestry.

"Ancestry is proud to partner with Getty Images and HBCUs to help preserve and celebrate the rich legacies of these important institutions for generations to come," **said Head of US Content and Philanthropic Initiatives at Ancestry, Dr. Lisa Pearl.** "By combining the vast archives of these historic institutions with Ancestry's cutting-edge technology, we're protecting these important documents and opening the door for families to uncover untold stories of inspiring HBCU alumni and ancestors."

This partnership was initiated with [Lincoln University](#), the nation's first degree-granting HBCU, in Pennsylvania, USA. Lincoln joined Getty Images' HBCU Grants Program last year with hundreds of contemporary and archival photos currently available for licensing in the [HBCU Collection](#) on [gettyimages.com](#). Ancestry has already started digitizing Lincoln's historical documents, including the Lincolnian and deteriorating records, as well as hundreds of photographs from Lincoln's archival collection.

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Getty Images and Ancestry launched their partnership at Lincoln University of Pennsylvania. The companies worked alongside the Langston Hughes Memorial Library staff to discover and digitize historical documents, records and photographs from Lincoln's historic archives which dates back to 1854. (Photos by Cassandra Illidge) Pictured: Tiffany Davis (Lincoln), Raquel Lightner (Lincoln), David Crockett (Ancestry) Not pictured: Ashley Gillard (Lincoln), Travis Primrose (Lincoln), Cassandra Illidge (Getty Images)

"We are immensely proud to partner with Getty Images and Ancestry to launch this partnership that will allow us the opportunity to not only tell the Lincoln story but also help families tell their stories of connections to the university," **said Lincoln University President Dr. Brenda A. Allen.** "Combining Getty Images' expertise in producing high-quality visuals with Ancestry's unparalleled genealogical resources, this collaboration will enrich our educational programs, foster deeper connections to our heritage, and empower our community to explore and celebrate the rich history of our university."

To learn more about the wider HBCU Grants Program, including the institutions working with Getty Images, additional program partners, scholarship and mentorship opportunities for students and access to the HBCU Collection, go to: <https://www.gettyimages.com/corporate-responsibility/hbcu-partnership>

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