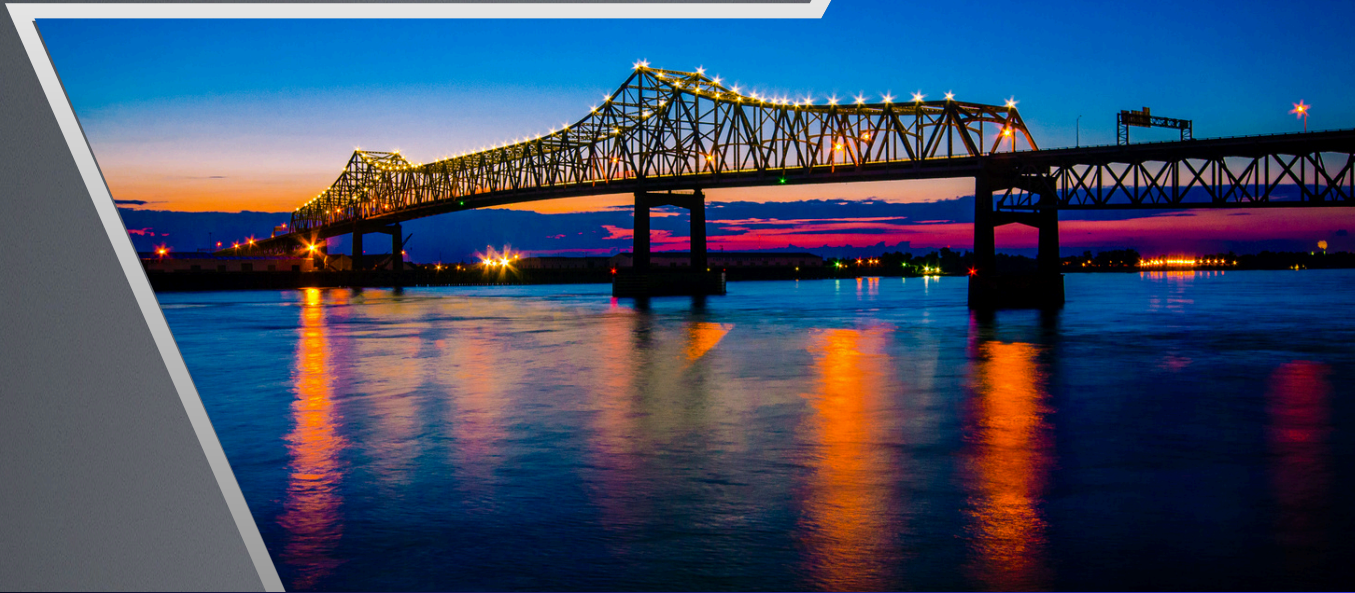


# 56<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE



## COUNCIL OF HISTORICALLY BLACK GRADUATE SCHOOLS (CHBGS)

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

FEBRUARY 17-18, 2026

**“Roots, Resilience, and Renaissance:  
Advancing Graduate Education  
at Historically Black Graduate Schools”**

**CONFERENCE  
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**Crowne Plaza Baton Rouge**

4728 Constitution Avenue  
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# Conference Plenary

## Sheena Cobrand, Esq.

Associate Vice Chancellor and Deputy General Counsel  
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

Sheena J. Cobrand serves as North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University's Associate Vice Chancellor and Deputy General Counsel. Her general practice portfolio includes administration and governance, risk management, campus safety, employment law, harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, disability and accessibility, civil rights, personnel matters, student affairs and conduct, contracts, threat assessment and behavioral intervention, policy development and review, privacy and confidentiality, sexual misconduct and violence, institutional compliance, including free speech and expression, Title IX, athletics, and research, and providing training and professional development for campus partners.

In October 2025, she was named to Leadership North Carolina Cohort 33, and expects to graduate in May 2026. Sheena earned her law degree from the Florida State University College of Law, bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism with a minor in French from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and is a North Carolina-certified public manager. She is a licensed member of the State Bar of North

Carolina, Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility (inactive status). Sheena is the author of "It's My Life: My Personal Record of Everything Important, a book intended as a guide in keeping a comprehensive journal of important legal records, medical records, and personal information and preferences.



**SHEENA COBRAND, ESQ**

# 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools

**“Roots, Resilience, and Renaissance: Advancing Graduate Education  
at Historically Black Graduate Schools”**

**DAY 1**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026**

<b>Registration (<i>Cypress I</i>)</b>	12:00 PM - 5:00 PM
<b>Business Meeting (<i>Natchez</i>) (Executive Committee Members Only)</b>	2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
<u>Agenda</u>	
Call to Order	Dr. John E. Smith Jr., President
Minutes	Dr. Caterina Bristol, Secretary
Treasurer’s Report	Dr. Tyisha Hathorn, Treasurer
President’s Report	Dr. John E. Smith, Jr., President
Audit Committee Report	
Nominating Committee Report	
New Business	
Adjournment	
<b>Leisure/Networking Activity Opportunity for Attendees</b>	3:30 PM - 5:30 PM
<b>Corporate Dinner for CHBGS Attendees and Invited Guests (<i>Cypress I</i>)</b>	6:30 PM

# 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools

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**DAY 2**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026**

**LOCATION: *CYPRESS II***

**Registration**

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Breakfast - 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM

Ice Breaker Activities - 9:15 AM - 9:45 AM

10:00 AM – 10:10 AM

**Presidential Welcome**

Dr. John E. Smith, Jr., President, CHBGS

Assistant Provost/AVP for Academic Affairs, Tougaloo College

10:10 AM – 10:20 AM

**Welcome from the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS)**

Dr. Chevelle Newsome, President

10:20 AM – 10:30 AM

**Welcome from the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS)**

Dr. Troy Terry, President

Dean, Graduate School, University of North Georgia

10:35 AM– 11:30 AM

**Conference Plenary: Graduate Education at HBCUs: Advancing in a Changing Landscape**

Sheena Cobrand, Esq., Associate Vice Chancellor & Deputy General Counsel

North Carolina A&T State University

LUNCH - 11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

Announcement of CHBGS Thesis/Dissertation Award Winners

Acknowledgement of CSGS 3MT HBCU Participants

Acknowledgement of Conference Sponsors

# 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools

## “Roots, Resilience, and Renaissance: Advancing Graduate Education at Historically Black Graduate Schools”

DAY 2

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026

LOCATION: CYPRESS II

1:00 PM – 1:50 PM

### ***Roots - Rooted in Collaboration: Strategic Partnerships & the Future of Graduate Education***

Panelists: Dr. Scott Challener, Dean, Graduate College, Hampton University; Dr. Desi Hacker, Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Research, Norfolk State University; Dr. John E. Smith, Jr., Assistant Provost/AVP for Academic Affairs, Tougaloo College

2:00 PM – 2:50 PM

### ***Resilience - Blowing Back at the Wind: HBCUs Collaboratively Preparing Ph.D. Students***

Panelists: Dr. Henry T. Frierson, Former Dean, Graduate School, University of Florida; Dr. Clay S. Gloster, Jr., Dean, Graduate School, North Carolina A&T State University; Dr. Preselfannie W. McDaniels, Interim Provost, Jackson State University

AFTERNOON REFRESHMENT BREAK 2:50 PM – 3:10 PM

3:10 PM – 4:00 PM

### ***Renaissance - Advancing STEM Graduate Success Through Structured Mentorship: A CIMER-Informed Model for Career Development and Leadership***

Presenter: Dr. Melanie J. Ragin, Senior Associate Dean, School of Graduate Studies, Meharry Medical College

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING - 4:10 PM – 5:00 PM

#### Agenda:

- Call to Order - Dr. John E. Smith, Jr., President
- Minutes – Dr. Caterina Bristol, Secretary
- Treasurer’s Report - Dr. Tyisha Hathorn, Treasurer
- Audit Committee Report
- Nominating Committee Report
- Old Business & New Business
- Closing Remarks – Dr. John E. Smith, Jr., President
- Installation of New Executive Board/Committee Members
- Adjournment

**CHBGS and CSGS Joint Reception - 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

(Crown Plaza Pool Area)





**SAVE THE DATE:  
57<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CHBGS CONFERENCE**

**February 16-17, 2027  
Arlington, VA**

**CONFERENCE SPONSOR**

