

Expanding Recruitment to HBCUs

A Fortune 100 pharmaceutical company sought to expand its talent acquisition strategy to include historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Challenge

Our client was passionate about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the company already employed a large number of HBCU graduates. While there were some siloed initiatives to outreach to HBCU students, leadership within the Compliance function felt it was important to streamline and formalize HBCU engagement, both to increase awareness of the company among HBCU students and to attract more diverse entry level talent into the recruitment pipeline for all departments and functions.

Collaborative Approach

Acquis collaborated with the client to develop and execute a two-pronged approach to HBCU outreach and engagement.

The first prong of the strategy involved increasing general awareness of the client company among HBCU students and community members. Acquis helped to showcase the company during seven HBCU Football Classic games in the first year, enabling our client to connect with a large number of HBCU students and alumnae, while leveraging a unique venue of central importance to HBCU culture.

The second prong of the strategy enabled the company to attract more diverse talent into the recruitment pipeline. Acquis helped the client to identify five target schools for deeper and sustained relationship building, based on target geography, relevant majors, and other mission-driven factors. We helped to open up partnerships with each university and to build a targeted engagement plan for the upcoming school year. Over 100 employees volunteered to support a series of career fairs, classroom lectures, on-campus tabling, PhD-level mentorship pairings, and homecoming tailgates, among other activities.

For each initiative, Acquis helped to define the strategy, build a business case for senior leadership, build relationships with HBCU faculty members, develop internal and external-facing communications, establish target KPIs, and measure performance against the intended outcomes.

Drive Change

With support from Acquis, our client was able to realize their vision of formalizing and expanding HBCU awareness building and talent recruitment initiatives. The project remains on track with work continuing into the Fall 2023 academic year.

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