



THE DAVY

The Monthly Newsletter for the Freddie T. Davy Honors College
at Hampton University

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February 2026 Edition

Hampton University Wins National Qualifying Tournament of Honda Campus All-Star Challenge



2026 National Qualifying Team

Victory on the National Stage

The National Qualifying Tournament for the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge is an academic competition where students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities compete against each other. Participants answer questions on subjects such as history and current events. This tournament decides which teams advance to the National Championship.

This year, Hampton University was represented by students from the Freddie T. Davy Honors College. On February 21st, 2026, at Virginia State University, the team competed and won the National Qualifying Tournament. They will advance to the 31st championship tournament this April, in California.



Editors: Nere Atunah-Jay, Nicole Beach, Isabella Campbell, Maya Powell, Miles Walker

Happenings in the Honors College

Hampton University Delivers Groundbreaking Performance in 26th VFIC Applied Ethics Bowl



Honors Students Represented: Malachi Hutcherson '27, Imani Laird '28, and Jadyn Wilson '27 (left to right).

On February 13th, 2026, five Hampton students represented the University at the 26th annual Applied Ethics Bowl, hosted by the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges (VFIC). The team faced unexpected challenges leading up to the Ethics Bowl, but triumphed in the face of adversity. They earned victories in two out of four rounds, and gave the eventual champion—Bridgewater College—its only defeat of the day. In the words of President Williams: “This is what Hampton produces; scholars who are intellectually fearless, ethically grounded, and prepared to lead in every room they enter.”

The Honors College had three of the five students representing Hampton on this year’s Ethics Bowl team: Malachi Hutcherson '27, Imani Laird '28, and Jadyn Wilson '27. Congratulations to these students on their contribution to success!

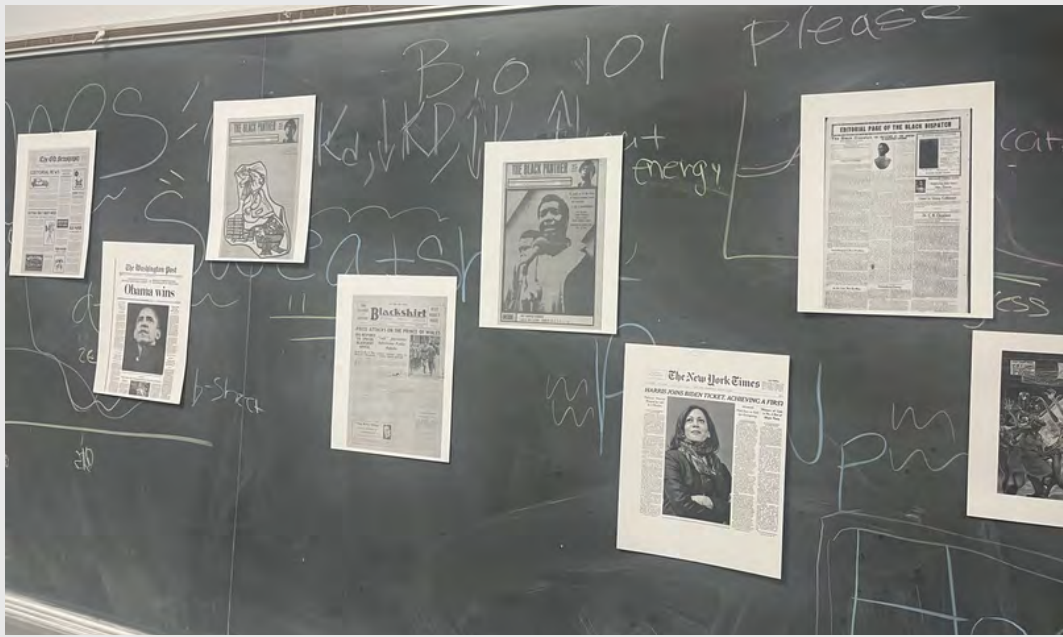
Beyond the Pages: A Book Talk with Dr. TaKeia Anthony

On February 12th, 2026, over 300 students from several HBCUs, including Clark Atlanta University, Claflin University, Hampton University, Prairie View A&M, and Spelman College joined a virtual book talk with Dr. TaKeia Anthony, the director of the Freddie T. Davy Honors College. Dr. Anthony discussed her book, *Delta Research and Educational Foundation: 55 Years of Black Women’s Intellectualism and Philanthropy, 1967–2022*. This book highlighted the important contributions Black women have made in history and philanthropy.

The event was part of The African American Honors Collective’s Faculty Fundamentals Speaker Series. Students asked many questions and learned about Black women’s leadership over the past 55 years. It was an inspiring event that united young scholars to celebrate this important history.



Happenings in the Honors College



Black History Month Escape Room

Students participated in a Black History Month Escape Room, where they worked together to solve clues and identify Black History figures. The activity involved using UV flashlights, unlocking boxes, and finding hidden keys.

Participants enjoyed snacks while collaborating and building teamwork skills. The event was both fun and engaging. It created a collaborative environment for scholars of the Freddie T. Davy Honors College to learn while having a good time.

Jack and Jill Event: Empowering the Future of HBCUs

The Historic Hampton Chapter of Jack and Jill of America Incorporated partnered with the Honors College to host Future Me @ HBCU. The event was geared toward elementary students in grades 3–5, to spark interest in attending an HBCU. The program encouraged students to take advantage of networks, make genuine connections, and remain open to new opportunities.

Honors College students spoke to youth about college preparation, the significance of the Freddie T. Davy Honors College, and why Hampton University was the best choice for them.



Jack and Jill Event Flyer

Honors Students Share the Love

Valentine's Day Party



The Valentine's Day Party was a social event in the Honors College hosted ahead of midterm examinations. Students enjoyed pizza and desserts while playing games and fellowshiping.



Valentine's Day 4-6 Table

The day before Valentine's Day, the Fundraising Committee, led by Jordan Hart, Treasurer of the Honors College, sold "Davy Grams" that included assorted candy for Valentine's Day.

These Davy Grams were decorated for Valentine's Day, generating many sales and interest in what the Honors College had to offer.



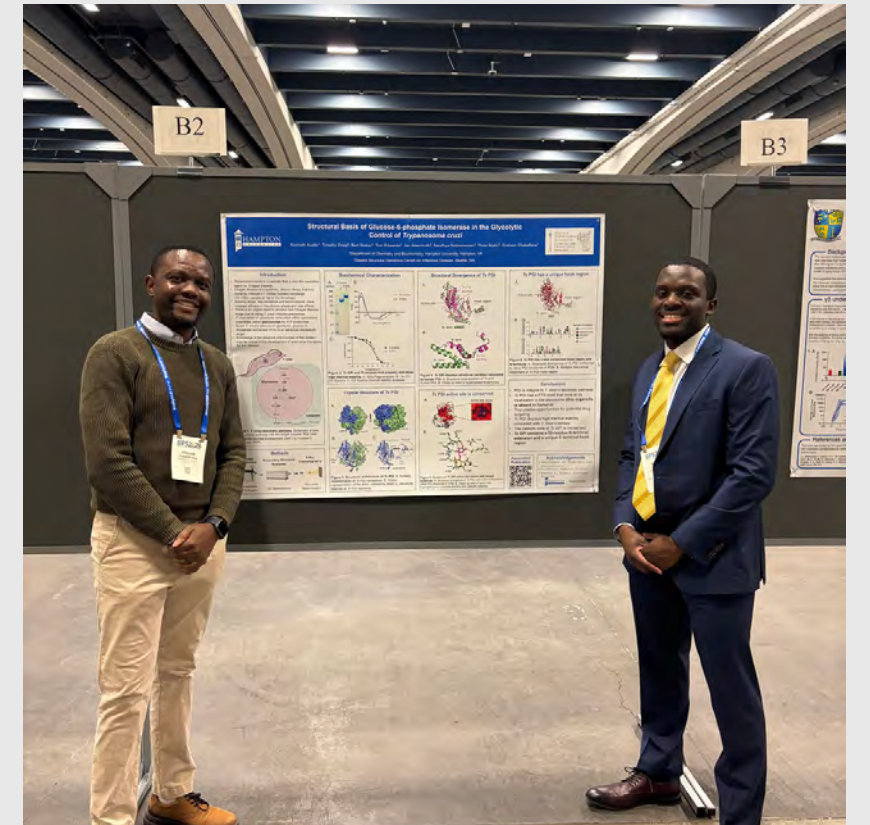
HoneyRose Smith, Miss Honors College, 2025-2026

Honors Spotlight

Kenneth Austin's Journey to Publishing Research on Vital Proteins in Treatment of Chagas Disease



Kenneth Austin



Austin and Dr. Chakafana Present Research Poster

Biophysical Society • March 2026

Kenneth Austin is a third-year student majoring in Biology and minoring in Psychology from Fort Wayne, Indiana, and is pursuing an MD/PhD. For about a year and a half, Austin and his research mentor, Dr. Graham Chakafana (pictured on the left), have been working on an intriguing publication that highlights the characteristics of two proteins. These proteins are attractive therapeutic targets for developing treatments against Chagas disease.

This disease is prevalent in Latin America and has infected 6–7 million people, with approximately 70 million people at risk of infection worldwide. Due to the urgent need for more therapies, Dr. Chakafana gave Austin the opportunity to spearhead the project. As a result, Austin became the first author on the newly published research article titled “Structural Characterization of Glycolytic Enzymes from *Trypanosoma cruzi*” in the *Journal of Molecular and Biochemical Parasitology*. An accumulation of many hours working in the “Chak Lab” in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry led to this achievement. Austin also submitted an abstract for this work to the Biophysical Society, which was accepted for a poster presentation.

The Biophysical Society is an international organization that brings together biophysicists and protein researchers from around the world for conferences held in the United States. These include regional, national, and international conferences. Austin had the opportunity to present this work at the Annual Biophysical Society Meeting in February in San Francisco. There were not many undergraduates accepted to present research at this conference, so the opportunity was an honor. At the conference, Austin presented the poster (shown in the picture) to fellow researchers, CEOs, founders, and the Dean of Hampton's School of Science, Dr. Taviare Hawkins, who serves on the leadership council for the Biophysical Society.

Honors Spotlight

Acceptance of Miles Walker into MIT's Summer Research Program



Cambridge, Massachusetts • Summer 2026

Miles Walker, a third-year Cybersecurity Major from Minneapolis, Minnesota, recently received an offer of admission into the MIT Summer Research Program (MSRP)! As a part of this year's cohort, he will be spending the summer conducting research under a faculty mentor on MIT's campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Walker will also have the opportunity to network with MIT faculty and other students, attend seminars on graduate preparation and professional development, and learn about MIT's graduate programs.

He first learned about the MSRP when representatives from MIT visited Hampton last semester to share details about the program. He then completed an application that involved multiple letters of recommendation and identification of potential faculty mentors. He also received an offer from Johns Hopkins University but decided that the MSRP aligned more with his area of study and career goals. This program will be very beneficial to Walker as he plans to pursue a Ph.D. in the future.



February Birthdays



Riley Bell
Freshman



Lavender Hall
Sophomore



Greer Lee
Freshman



Zion Murphy
Freshman



Savannah Ojeda
Sophomore



Simone Powell
Junior



Norah Smith
Junior



Ayana Van Demark
Junior

Acknowledgments

A Special Thank You to the Hampton University Administration for supporting the Honors College. Thank you, Honors College Students for all your hard work in the classroom and in the community.

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