

During Spring 2026, The Alabama Collective (TAC) continued to build on its statewide impact by partnering with colleges and universities across Alabama to deliver student-centered programming focused on innovation, workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and leadership development. Through a dynamic mix of campus-based experiences, hands-on competitions, and targeted trainings, TAC expanded access to opportunities that allowed students to develop practical skills, bring ideas to life, and engage directly with real-world career pathways across the state.



Innovation Power Hours (IPH)

Early in the Spring 2026 semester, TAC hosted Innovation Power Hours (IPH) at Talladega College, Stillman College, and Oakwood University, continuing to expand its reach across Alabama campuses. These high-energy, interactive sessions provided HBCU students, faculty, and staff with exposure to emerging technologies, career pathways, and entrepreneurship through hands-on demonstrations and real-world applications.

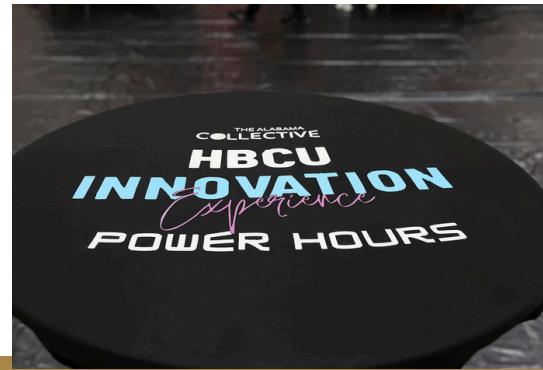
Serving as a key entry point into TAC's ecosystem, IPHs introduced students to design thinking, innovation, and problem-solving while highlighting opportunities in areas such as artificial intelligence, immersive technologies, and small business development. The sessions deepened campus engagement, increased student participation, and built confidence, encouraging students to take the next step into TAC's trainings, competitions, and broader leadership pathways.



Innovate Alabama Entrepreneurship Hackathon (IA-EH)

The Innovate Alabama Entrepreneurship Hackathon (IA-EH) brought together ambitious students and aspiring founders from across Alabama for a high-impact, full-day experience in Birmingham. Participants engaged in hands-on entrepreneurship training, mentorship, and intensive problem-solving, culminating in a live pitch showcase where students presented innovative solutions to real-world public safety challenges.

More than 30 teams initially entered the competition, with the top teams advancing through multiple rounds to compete in the final showcase. Nearly \$20,000 in prizes were awarded to student-led ventures, alongside mentorship and continued support to help bring their ideas to life. The hackathon not only highlighted the creativity and technical talent of Alabama students, but also reinforced TAC's commitment to building workforce-ready innovators, fostering cross-campus collaboration, and equipping students with the tools, confidence, and connections to lead in Alabama's growing innovation economy.



EY3 Agile Project Management Certification

In partnership with EY3 Technologies, TAC delivered an Agile Project Management (PSM I) training designed to equip students with in-demand, workforce-ready skills in project execution and team leadership. Through a series of interactive virtual sessions, participants explored Agile principles and Scrum practices while engaging in real-world simulations that reinforced practical application.

The program generated strong interest, with 82 student submissions, competing for one of the 10 seats. Of those selected, 80% of the students received their Professional Scrum Master I (PSM I) certification. The test for the certification was included at no cost. Participants benefited from hands-on instruction, mentorship from experienced Agile professionals, and practical exposure to real-world project environments.



App Build & Pitch (AB&P) Competition

The HBCU App Build & Pitch Competition brought together top student innovators from across Alabama's HBCUs for a high-impact, in-person experience in Montgomery. Students moved beyond ideation to build functional applications, participate in targeted workshops, and receive mentorship from industry professionals, culminating in a live pitch showcase before a panel of judges.

From a competitive pool of applicants, the top 10 teams advanced to the final rounds, where they received mentoring, strengthened their technical execution, and participated in a "Get Hired" workshop focused on workplace expectations, hiring practices, and career readiness.

The competition concluded with the top teams presenting their solutions. The top 3 winners taking home \$15,000 in prizes and support beyond the program.

Pivot Tech Data Analytics

In partnership with Pivot Tech, TAC delivered a Data Analytics Boot Camp designed to equip participants with in-demand technical skills and create accessible pathways into high-growth tech careers. This fully virtual, instructor-led program provided over 250 hours of hands-on training in tools such as Excel, SQL, Power BI, and Python, culminating in real-world capstone projects. The program successfully graduated 8 participants, who gained practical experience, mentorship, and exposure to industry tools, strengthening their readiness to pursue careers in data and analytics while reinforcing TAC's commitment to building a diverse, workforce-ready talent pipeline.

EY3 AI + Python Bootcamp

In partnership with EY3 Technologies, TAC launched an AI + Python Foundations Bootcamp designed to introduce students to programming and artificial intelligence through an accessible, beginner-friendly experience. This instructor-led, virtual program combined coding fundamentals with real-world AI concepts, enabling participants to build practical skills in Python while exploring how AI is applied across industries. Through hands-on learning and guidance from industry professionals, students strengthened their technical foundation, gained clarity on emerging tech career pathways, and took an important step toward entering the rapidly growing fields of software development and artificial intelligence.



Internship Program

TAC brought on two interns this spring, who played a critical role in supporting communications, program execution, and student engagement across the organization's initiatives. Interns contributed to social media promotion, event coordination, and on-site support for key programs and competitions, helping ensure seamless delivery and strong participant experiences. They also supported program managers in tracking metrics, managing logistics, and executing campus-based events, gaining hands-on experience in program operations, and communications, while building professional skills in teamwork, accountability, and leadership.

We launched our fundraising campaign!

The Alabama Collective wants to expand access to innovation, training, and career pathways for students across Alabama. This spring we launched our Level Up Campaign, an initiative focused on scaling programs, increasing student impact, and building sustainable support for the future. This campaign invites partners, supporters, and the broader community to invest in the next generation of talent and entrepreneurs, with every contribution helping to fund trainings, competitions, mentorship, and real-world opportunities for students.

To learn more or support the campaign, visit: <https://givebutter.com/the-alabama-collective>



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