

Casting a wide net:
How Florida A&M University
is educating donors of all
ages on the importance of
legacy giving



THE OPPORTUNITY

As a public, historically Black university, FAMU has a legacy of providing access to high-quality, affordable education through programs and services that guide students toward achieving their dreams. This work is supported by the Division of University Advancement, whose lean staff raises critical funds to move the University’s mission forward.

While the University received ample support from individual donors through annual fund and endowment campaigns, planned giving efforts were slower to ignite — especially with limited bandwidth. The University knew in order to reach more donors, they’d have to expand their strategies. And when FreeWill reached out, they seized the opportunity to revitalize their legacy giving program.

“We realized that we needed to diversify the ways in which our alumni were giving. We really wanted to make sure people see legacy giving and planned giving as ways to give not only today but well into the future,” says Dr. Friday-Stroud.



FreeWill is helping expose people in our community to this additional way of giving and diversifying the ways in which they give. In some cases, people think that you have to be at a certain level to give in this way. I think FreeWill helps to educate people that you can start small but have a huge impact over time.



Dr. Shawnta Friday-Stroud
Vice President of University Advancement, Executive Director of the FAMU Foundation, and Dean of the School of Business and Industry

THE SOLUTION

Since launching with FreeWill in June 2022, the University has raised over \$2.9 million in bequest commitments — a number that continues to grow.

Their success is the result of a two-fold approach: outreach and education.

By reaching out to alumni and community donors of all ages and economic backgrounds, the University has expanded its pool of supporters. “Our outreach really cuts across all demographics. We'd much rather cast a wider net because it's also about educating our constituents on this as a way of giving. And we can [educate] some of our younger alumni, who aren't making as much money now, to help them start thinking about getting their plan together earlier. Then, the University could potentially see greater returns on it in the future,” shares Dr. Friday-Stroud.

They've also looked beyond soliciting donations by leveraging their FreeWill partnership as a way to educate donors on the different ways they can support the University, both now and in the future.

The University's focus on engaging and educating donors has made its planned giving program a resounding success — its impact will be felt not only within the University but throughout the community in which it resides.

“Part of our mission is to ensure that we are serving the members of our communities where we live and work and to ensure that we are preparing our students to be the best they can be as they leave us and move into the world of work,” explains Dr. Friday-Stroud. “FreeWill's mission of providing free access to estate planning tools gives people a way to say, ‘Hey, I can give back in this way!’ and it's pretty painless in that there are no costs that they have to come up with upfront.”

RESULTS IN 15 MONTHS

\$2.9M+

in bequest commitments

56

new legacy donors

At FreeWill, our mission is to raise \$1 trillion for charity — that's why we've made it easier for nonprofits to unlock transformational gifts. Gift officers at leading nonprofits use our intuitive giving tools combined with best-in-class strategy and training to find, convert, and steward more high impact donors.



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