

Black colleges must retool to stay competitive, says RNC panel

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By Tiara Sargeant

CLEVELAND – Many Historically Black Colleges and Universities must change their business models in order to stay competitive and viable in the higher education industry, said moderators and panelists at a Republican National Convention-related event Thursday.

Many professors at HBCUs are underpaid, said **Johnny C. Taylor Jr.**, president and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. Andrew Clark Jr. (pictured far right in photo), a 2013 Howard University graduate, said during an exchange with an audience member that low faculty pay and punishing workloads at his campus created perceptions that professors don't care, or students or professors are not having great relationships.



Meanwhile, numerous so-called PWIS's – Predominantly White Institutions – said the panelists, are appealing to African-American student prospects to come and diversify those campuses.

Restructured business models and more money must be invested in the **107 HBCUs**, said the panelists, in order to stay competitive with all 4,700 public and private colleges and universities. Taylor noted that Hampton University, a top-tier HBCU, prospers because its President, **William R. Harvey**, Ed.D., 100-percent owner of a Pepsi bottler in Michigan, applies corporate-style management of his Virginia campus.

Other participants in "EEO: Education, Entrepreneurship & Opportunity" session held at Holy Trinity Church here were **Jill Homan**, Republican National Committeewoman for District of Columbia and founder of City GOP, and panelists Christine Brooks, CEO, Brooks and Associates, and also former education adviser to Jeb Bush; Antonio Campbell, board member, **The Crossroads School**, Baltimore.

*The writer (pictured left in photo), a **Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications** student, also served as a panelist.*