Aaron Chambers

OpEd

Similar to most college campuses, my first week of school was filled with fun and exciting activities that not only motivated me, but also left me under the impression that I would finally have the opportunity to be challenged as I had always wished in the past. However, this was soon proved to be less accurate than presented. Not only were majority of my professors very disconnected from the students, but they also showed no interest in making sure we were being instructed in a manner that promoted the most stimulating academic experience. Many teachers did not even have an issue with the fact that they "gave" grades to undeserving students, promoting a mentality that influences a student to accept mediocrity and to not challenge themselves to be the best scholars possible.

In addition, there was not nearly enough access to opportunities on and off campus. Of course, there were a few internship and job positions that were extended to the students and even a few entrepreneurship programs. However, one the most displeasing discoveries about my University was the fact that we did not seem to have the motivation to reach out to the students who really strive for excellence. This led many of them to believe that they lacked proper resources to accomplish their goals.

Students need to have multiple ways to tap into their talents and have hands-on experience with their career paths. They should at least have more opportunities to understand where their strengths are and how to utilize them in the most productive ways. Many students today are not taught to use their individual abilities to create the most good, they are taught to follow along a system that creates more of the same types of people to run the same types of companies and organizations. The idea and practice of innovation should be an extremely important aspect of our educational system but is obviously not a priority.

Following my recent journey through the University Innovation Fellows training program, I developed great insight on how to alleviate these issues. An important discovery that I made was the fact that our University has an alarming lack of communication through various departments.Our institution, like many, has many great great plans to make sure it offers the best opportunities but we lack in communicating this to our students. I discovered that there are various opportunities that exist in each department, but there is hardly a format to get this information out to the entire campus. My solution to this issue is creating various platforms to connect these departments and give the students and faculty an opportunity to reach out to each others and explore new innovative ways to enhance our university. One way to do this is to upgrade our university mobile application so that it is very reliable source for the latest

scholarships, internships and events that will take place within our area and others as well as promote current programs that are held on our campus to increase student participation. Another way is to bring together the various departments by offering different programs to collect all minds of the university to work one accord. This would include Lean Startup, TEDx talks, Shark Tank events and even Hack-a-thons to better incorporate other departments with the Computer Science department and create a more unified institution.

These are only a few of the programs that I wish to bring to our campus to bring a stronger atmosphere of innovation and entrepreneurship. The main objective of these solutions is to incorporate new tactics to create a lasting and very impactful change to Clark Atlanta University. We offer wonderful programs already but we do not take the necessary steps to ensure that each and every student is aware of when and where they take place. I look forward to creating this long-lasting change to CAU along with my UIF team to make certain that our institution is functioning at the highest level possible with outstanding results to prove it.