

[N.C. Dems reach out to HBCUs](#) (Charlotte Post – March 24, 2011)

North Carolina Democrats are looking to strengthen ties with students at historically black colleges. The College Democrats of North Carolina will hold a leadership conference for HBCU students March 26 at the Downtown Greensboro Marriott on North Greene Street. The forum – a first for the state Democratic Party – will focus on engaging students in the political process, political activity and on-campus leadership. North Carolina has 11 HBCUs, second only to Alabama. "HBCU students have a unique story and this HBCU Leadership Conference is here to ensure that we give them a voice and a seat at the table," said N.C. A&T student D.J. McKelvey, CDNC's black college coordinator. U.S. Rep. **Mel Watt** of Charlotte will be among the panelists and speakers, which include N.C. Reps. Marcus Brandon and Alma Adams, N.C. Sen. Gladys Robinson and state Democratic Party Chair David Parker. Panel topics include "HBCUs, Politics and History," "Black Women and Politics," "How to Run for Public Office" and "Campaign and Professional Involvement." The opening session will start at 9 a.m. and the closing dinner and presentations will begin at 5:30 p.m. Party activists see the conference as an opportunity to strengthen ties between Democrats and young voters whose support helped Barack Obama carry North Carolina in the 2008 presidential election. "The College Democrats of North Carolina recognize the importance of engaging HBCU students," CDNC President Tori Taylor said. "We are taking the first step in hopefully a long, consistent line of communication between HBCU students and the Democratic Party."