



Alexis Wagner, Texas Southern University- c/o 2017, Public Relations



Name : Alexis Wagner

Your HBCU : Texas Southern University

Graduation Year : 2017

Major : Public Relations

Minor : Mass Communications

1. Where are you from? Who introduced you to HBCUs?*

I'm from Texas, I would say one place, but with my fathers career we moved so much that I call the entire state my home. My dad, Coach Wagner, introduced me to HBCUs through coaching at North Carolina A&T, Grambling State, and Alabama A&M.



Graduation day

2. Why did you choose an HBCU over a pwi?*

I chose an HBCU, because being on the sideline as a football coach's daughter I fell in love with the culture, and when the time for me to go to college came I knew I wanted to experience it for myself.

3. What is the story of your "experience" at Your HBCU given its heralded status as a stellar and prestigious institution?*

Going to an HBCU was the best decision I've ever made, because I got to learn so much about myself, my history and how to thrive and survive as a black professional. We don't realize how much information about who we are has been withheld growing up until someone opens our eyes, and my professors really opened my eyes about how valuable we are as a people, but how we are treated like we're less than. When you realize your worth in society and the world itself, your point of view changes about how you should be treated and what you deserve. I graduated from Texas Southern University a proud and strong black woman, who walks into a room knowing exactly what I want and demanding to be treated a certain type of way. My experiences taught me that I am just as educated, beautiful, powerful and strong as any other woman or man I am put up against.

4. "First time" experiences at your HBCU?*

My first day on campus they had a pep rally for the incoming freshman. I graduated from a majority white high school, and always felt like I wasn't very attractive because the way people talked about my darker complexion. Well, this day during the pep rally the mascot point at me, rubbed his hands together, and came and picked me up and put me on his shoulders. I couldn't

believe he picked me out of every other girl in the crowd. Where I came from, that would've never happened. After that night a lot of the other freshman knew who I was and I was fairly popular. I'd always been known a social person, and my personality always made me popular, but it was different. I wasn't only popular, but I fit in. I instantly fell in love with TSU.

5. Who are the professors that have impacted your life in and out of the classroom? How did they do that?*

Professor Christina Sanders. She was my political science professor. She taught me so much about the way politics are designed to keep black people oppressed and it opened my eyes to how systematically oppressed we are as a people. From then on, I started to value education so much more and talk to underprivileged kids about how important it is. Her changing my life helped me change other people's lives. She also took me to networking events which led to me getting internships.



My dad, an HBCU coach, and my brother, another HBCU student at NCA&T

6. How do you deal with racism when you encounter it?

Attending an HBCU, you'll often see people scowl when you tell them where you attend or attended college. It is important to know that there is a reason why people, both black and white, feel the way that they do about black college. I'm glad I went to an HBCU and learned to deal with underlying racism from black people who are conditioned to think the way that they do, and white people who really feel like we are less than. I can proudly say that I graduated from Texas Southern University and keep a smile on my face when they frown, and even rebuttal when I have to.