



Ariel Williams , University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff- c/o 2021, Music Education



Name : Ariel Williams

Your HBCU : University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Graduation Year : 2021

Major : Music Education

Minor : N/A

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

I am originally from Camden, AR. Members of the alumni chapter in my hometown first introduced me to the university. Then, the Vesper Choir would come annually to perform.



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

My high school did NOT promote HBCUs as well as they did with PWIs. I wanted to be the different one from my classmates. Being at an HBCU has brought a perspective that I wouldn't have received at a PWI.

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

I'm a freshman, so my experience has just begun. In the short time I've been attending my HBCU, my experience has been an eye opener. Although we have faced many hardships throughout this year, we have all come together as one unified student body. The Student Government Association does a great job of making sure the voices of the students are heard. There are also many programs on campus that not only connect us to the corporate world, but to the entire world through the study abroad programs. I participated in the LIONS Program this year. LIONS is an acronym for Learning Institute and Opportunities for New Students. It helped me become accustomed to the university, meet new people, and start school with six credits added to my transcript. There are so many great things happening at my HBCU and I am proud to say that I bleed black and gold.

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

The LIONS Program was my first time experience as a student on campus. I auditioned and was selected to be a part of the world renowned Vesper Choir as well.

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

Professor Demarr Woods, Mr. Andee Book, and Dr. Michael Bates. These three gentlemen have shown me what true love, dedication, and joy for music really means in their own ways. Professor Woods teaches Music Theory, among many other things. I admire the enthusiasm he has for teaching music every day I attend his class. Even outside of class, he's willing to do anything he can to help us music majors. Mr. Book is my vocal instructor, and he's Caucasian. Him being one of the few Caucasian instructors in the music department is inspiring in itself. He's helped me to become more comfortable with my singing voice, and I have. If it wasn't for him and Dr. Bates (who was the man responsible for my being in the Vesper Choir), I would've never known how great my abilities as a musician really are.



6. Your wildest moment at college?

We went viral for this one. I was eating dinner in the cafe one day and saw a Que pick up one of my classmates to put her on his shoulders and he dropped her. The video became so popular, The Shade Room posted it the same day.

7. What is your major? and Why did you choose it?

My major is music education. I chose that as my major as an opportunity to challenge myself to find out what other musical talents I may have and to strengthen the ones I know about. I hopefully plan to return to my hometown and become choir director at my old high school.

8. What to date has been your happiest moment @ Your HBCU?

The Baptist Collegiate Ministry has really kept me going in school. After telling them my story of God's goodness in my life, I witnessed a few young ladies give their life to Christ, and it was the best thing that I've seen in a long time. My heart swelled. It was beautiful.

9. What and where are the historical places on campus?

Caldwell Hall is the oldest building on campus. It's right in the middle of campus, along with the William O' Bryant Bell Tower, which is one of Arkansas' oldest landmarks.

10. How did you overcome your nervousness about going to college?

By getting to know people and stepping out of my comfort zone almost every chance I get. I still struggle with this, so I just take it one day at a time.

11. What advice would you give high school students filling out college applications for the first time?

I'd tell them to take their time with it, but not too much time. Fill out everything to the best your ability. The information you put on your application is critical for your acceptance.

12. If you could only speak two sentences to the youth coming after you what would you say?

Trust God. Never lose focus.

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