



Chansi Coleman, Tuskegee University- c/o 2002, Agriculture



Name : Chansi Coleman

Your HBCU : Tuskegee University

Graduation Year : 2002

Major : Agriculture

Minor : N/A

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

I was born and raised in Warner Robins, GA. Warner Robins is located in Houston County, which is the central part of the state. I was introduced to HBCUs as a little girl flipping through the yearbook pages of Morris Brown College in Atlanta, GA. I was fascinated with the social decorum pictured on black and white pages. My mom would share stories of how women wore dresses and gloves to Sunday dinner, men wore suits and how they provided opportunities for economically disadvantaged Blacks to attend college. There were many stories and I was fascinated by the idea of college. My college sweetheart parents later produced a Fort Valley State University graduate and double graduates from Tuskegee University. I can go a step further and say that when we were introduced to Whitley, Dwayne, Ron, Kim, Jaleesa, Freddie and Maggie..... you wanted to experience everything first hand at Hillman College. The college and social experience gained from an HBCU is clearly like no other.



One of our many hens we raise for fresh eggs

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

As a child growing up in a family with careers in education and agriculture, my choices were directed at land grant institutions. I had several opportunities, but I followed my sister and joined her as a Presidential Scholar to study environmental science through the College of Agriculture , Environmental and Natural Sciences at Tuskegee University.

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

My time at Tuskegee not only challenged me to think more globally, strategically and practically about environmental and agricultural issues but cultivated my leadership skills, and further confirmed my passion for teaching. My life forever changed when I attended meetings to organize a protest against the building of a landfill in Tuskegee. This experience further motivated me to seek opportunities to be a change agent and seek opportunities to do work to further improve and empower others to protect the earth we lived in. This led to a research fellowship at the George Washington Carver Experiment Station on the campus of Tuskegee University where I studied growth rates of peanuts and sweet potatoes grown hydroponically. This work then led to summer internships at both Johnson and Kennedy Space Centers. With a new set of knowledge and skills, the pivotal moment when I realized my true calling of being an educator was while leading student tours at NASA-Kennedy Space Center explaining to kids why hydroponically grown sweet potato and peanuts were grown for possible space missions. Continuing in the footsteps of Dr. George Washington Carver, I continued my educational studies in Agricultural Education at Iowa State University where I completed a master's degree and teacher certification.

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

Who can say they worked at the George Washington Carver Experiment Station which led to not one but two summer internships at NASA? Not many can say they pledged Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Gamma Kappa Chapter Spring 2000 with 24 fabulous line sisters. Only the Ag crew can say they took classes in Millbank Hall which housed the lab of Dr. George Washington Carver. So many firsts for me to last a lifetime.

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

Dr. Ramble Ankumah is one of the most recognizable faces of Millbank Hall. He worked hard as a professor of Environmental Science and Assistant Dean for the College of Agriculture. He not only spoke and taught with passion, but also mentored his students.



In my spare time, I "Cultivate with Coleman" and teach children about horticulture.

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