



Francene L. Botts, Kentucky State University- c/o 1980, Political Science



Name : Francene L. Botts

Your HBCU : Kentucky State University

Graduation Year : 1980

Major : Political Science

Minor : English

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

I am originally from Lexington, Kentucky. I believe it was Mrs? Juanita Wright, a physical Education teacher in the Lexington School System. She later taught at KSU.



Much respect to Professor Dr. Leonard Slade, Jr. | Image Credit: ecsu.edu

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

I got bussed in junior and senior high school. There were only about 300 Blacks in either school. I thought I was losing my identity so I applied to Tennessee State, Kentucky State and UK. I was accepted at all three, but selected KSU since there was a family legacy. I had also attended Upward Bound at KSU. [How did you decide to become a student at Kentucky State University?] I wanted the Black Collegiate experience. My sister is eight years older than me and she attended KSU. She would have her Sorors come to the house for Derby parties. I wanted that experience. Then I wanted to be on a campus were I was more than a number, KSU provided that place.

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

I was a Resident. Hall Assistant, I tutored the men's Baseball Team; was on Student Court, SGA, pledged a sorority. I would say the "HBCU experience" was being able to be involved on campus and to be considered a leader by my peers, as well as administrators and professors. I was able to interact with administrators and regents as a student member of the SACS Accreditation process while at KSU. At first I was intimidated, but one of the administrators told me that I had just as much of a right to offer input as any of the PHDs or others. When I attended PWIs for my masters and law Degrees I didn't have this level of interaction with administrators and faculty.

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

N/A

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

I had a double major in English and Political Science and almost a third in History. So I would have to say Dr. Henry Cheaney, history professor! Drink. Leonard Slade, English professor! Drink. Cassie Osborne and Dr. Booker Ingram, Political Science professors. These professors pushed me to speak with confidence, write with confidence and to never accept being average.



Pasquale's Strombolis in Morehead, Kentucky | Image Credit: Yelp.com by way of Jennifer P.

6. Best restaurants on/near campus? Best dishes?

Frisch's Big Boy. Hot fudge Sundaes; Pasquale's Strombolis and Taco Johns tacos. Of course you had Kentucky Fried Chicken.

7. College crush?

One of my brother's solder kappa brothers. I see him at every homecoming, but they all saw me as their little sister. Too many brothers without the Kappas thinking they were also my brothers. The quarterback. He knew it, but he was too much of a player.

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

I knew I wanted to attend law school, so my majors and almost third major helped me to develop the writing and critical thinking skills I needed to accomplish those goals. I had a double major in English and Political Science and almost a third in history. I completed an Internship with the Social Security Administration the summer after my sophomore year.

9. Where are the spots to go to if you wanted to cuddle with your boy or girlfriend?

The Library, the grill, the tunnel between main campus and the other side.

10. What are the chants heard most often at the sporting events?

For KSU it was "there is a school, upon a hill, called KSU, KSU, tough KSU."

11. How are you positively active on campus? (e.g. clubs, SGA, etc.)

I was involved in student government in. Both high school and college; Associate Chief Justice on the KSU Student Court, Student Activities Board, RA, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and other activities. Editor of Kentucky River Literary magazine, tutor. This has led me to be involved with nonprofit Boards in every city I have lived in.

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

I wasn't nervous because I had a sister that had graduated from KSU and had three older brothers in attendance and my twin brother. Plus I had attended Upward Bound at KSU so I thought I already knew the ropes. Having been in UB I started out with six hours already completed. Dr. Slade taught English 101, myself and another UB student led the class as bridge students. We

couldn't drop, but a lot of college students did. As I stated before, he challenges us to write and speak well.

13. How did your HBCU prepare you for a diverse workplace?

The faculty at KSU was very diverse when I attended. The student body was also diverse, although the resident students were predominantly African-American. I had attended predominantly white schools from the 7th through 12 grades. I have interacted with persons of diverse backgrounds all my life.

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

We didn't have the Preview Days or Open houses when I was going through that process, so I would advise students to avail themselves of these opportunities. Also, if they can get hooked into any of the Divine 9s programs that benefit middle and high school students, for them to do so. Talk to their African-American teachers about their college experiences. They should also know whether they need the intimacy of a smaller school to remain focused or a larger school to be anonymous.

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

Don't assume you can't be mentored if you are in a situation where no one looks like you and take advantage of opportunities to experience things different than what you are used to. This will prepare them for the real world. One more - learn how to communicate outside social media, i.e., in real sentences instead of text speak.

16. How did your HBCU help you to transition into your careers workforce?

I ran track, played basketball and was in the beta Club at Tates Creek Senior high. I also received the Outstanding Senior female athlete award from Sewanee, the university of the South.