



Jessicena Corcoran, Coppin State University- c/o 2014, Sociology



Name : Jessicena Corcoran

Your HBCU : Coppin State University

Graduation Year : 2014

Major : Sociology

Minor : Political Science

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

I am from Geneva, NY. I was introduced to HBCUs by my Dad, when I went on a college tour.



Graduation Speech

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

I wanted to get out of NY. I was born & raised in a small town, surrounded by no one who looked like me. Going to college, where you're not just the "smart mixed chick" felt good. I love seeing all people of color/ race/ creed, being together with one goal in mind... To succeed!

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

I literally LOVED college. Loved college life, and loved all the experiences it brought a long with it. I had great experience at my HBCU #AyeCoppin. I double majored and received 2 degrees. I was senior class president, I had a job which I loved. Graduated in the top of my class, joined 3 honor societies and have an amazing network of faculty and other alumni! When people look at an HBCU they think you went to school just to party and come out into the world with a "C" knowledge. I feel as if just like anywhere else in the country you have to work 10Xs harder to "compete" with PWIs and I will choose an HBCU all over again. When I graduated I didn't just feel like I accomplished something, I felt prepared for the world!

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

Driving to campus I was literally scared... we were dead set in the middle of Zone 6 in Baltimore. When I first stepped foot on campus I told myself this is absolutely NOT where I am going. The campus was under construction, the staff didn't seem friendly, and I just knew I was going to play Softball for Morgan State. I was upset because it was literally my last choice for school and I was excepted to every college I applied to.

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

Number 1 would definitely be Dr. Claudia Nelson. Not only was she a great professor that made you work hard, she has been an amazing mentor! I always knew I had a passion to help people, but she helped me see what I wanted and needed out of life. Dr. Nelson also saw my potential and pushed me to be the best student and leader I could. Also I would like to mention Dr. Klugh, and Dr. Taylor... they both molded me into a better person by shaping my mind. All of our staff were at the top of their fields and I can call on any of them when I need to!



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

I was my Senior Class President for Class of 2014! I felt a change needed to happen and I tried to make that change. Faith Focus Finish... have Faith in everything you do, Focus on the task at hand, and FINISH everything you start!

7. What was your saddest moment in your life to date?

I really think the saddest moment to date was losing a very very close friend from college! I still struggle with this loss! He was my Son's God father and it was the closest loss I have had to date! He was loved by the Coppin Community, but also by everyone in general!

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

I don't know if it was the HBCU alone or the fact I went to a predominantly white high school first but I was completely prepared for the workforce! I never really experienced real racism until I went to college. I dealt with classism for sure growing up but it wasn't until I went to college where I witnessed "real life" racism. I learned even with the right credentials sometimes you still have to fight harder for something you think you deserve! I believe if you work hard enough no one can overlook your shine!