



Lance Young, Morehouse College- c/o 1995, Chemistry



Name : Lance Young

Your HBCU : Morehouse College

Graduation Year : 1995

Major : Chemistry

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

I was born and raised in New Jersey and am a product of Newark Public Schools. My parents both taught in that same school system and they made sure that the path to college was always on my mind from the time I could walk.



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

My mother dreamed of sending her only son to Princeton. She also took me on a tour of Harvard and Boston Universities when I was in elementary school. My dad was a lot more hands-on when it was actually time to apply. He asked my opinion but then presented me with his own list of 20 colleges to which I should apply. Hampton, Howard, Fisk and Morehouse were the only HBCUs on that list but my eyes were quickly fixed on Morehouse. It was the only school that gave me a true glimpse of the man I could become — one that matched the model of shining Black manhood that I saw in my mind's eye. Because of my SAT score and a feeder program that existed with Newark Public Schools at the time, I was presented with the opportunity to attend Harvard. My sights were set on Morehouse though and it was the only school to which I completed an application, having applied early decision. When My acceptance letter arrived in the mail, I carried it and the brochure with me to school EVERY DAY until graduation.

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

Simply put, Morehouse made me into the man I am today. It was the first time in my life that I felt comfortable just "being". I was surrounded and challenged by like-minded (and some not so much but sharp nonetheless) men who were intellectually driven and community minded. Morehouse challenged me to grow into her crown and develop into a scholar, a gentleman and a man of consequence and agency. I even met the woman that would become my wife at Spelman during my sophomore year. Attending was among the best decisions I have ever made in my life.

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

I had a LOT of meaningful "first time" experiences at Morehouse, both social and academic. The one that probably most set me off on my career path was the opportunity to participate in

scientific research. I had amazing mentors who made me realize that a PhD could be in my future. I had never even considered a career in academia until I started working at the bench.

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

My class was the last to have the experience of learning under Dr. Henry C. McBay. He was a giant among men and demanded nothing but the best from us. I remember taking his 8 am class as a freshman and being a few minutes late. It was a small class and when I arrived, I was the first to enter the lecture room...but he had already started lecturing to the empty classroom and had filled up a full board with notes! He was not going to wait for us and he was not going to lower his standards because we weren't mature enough to meet them yet. That was one of many life lessons that he taught by word and deed.

