



Lester Holmes, Wilberforce University- c/o 1999, Mass Communications



Name : Lester Holmes

Your HBCU : Wilberforce University

Graduation Year : 1999

Major : Mass Communications

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

I'm from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Born and raised (Go Steelers!). I first heard of HBCU's by watching a show called "A Different World." I wanted to go to Hillman.



Graduation! | Image Credit: Lester Holmes

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

My main motivation was my desire to leave Pittsburgh. I love my hometown but I needed change. I didn't believe the change I needed would have come from me attending the University of Pittsburgh or Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) I wanted to experience something different. I also wanted the opportunity to learn more about my culture and also to learn more about myself. Felt Like Home - Feel free to elaborate... To be truthful, Wilberforce wasn't my first choice. I had my mind set on going to Hampton. However, Hampton was out of my financial reach. My second choice was Grambling State, but that's a long way from home, especially on Greyhound. My third choice was Wilberforce. I visited the campus and it was very rural but you could tell that it was a historic place. And as they say, the rest is history.

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

Wilberforce is my family. There isn't a day that goes by where I'm not in communication with someone affiliated with Wilberforce. That "family" experience is unique to HBCU's. I think you would have to attend one to fully grasp the concept of the family bond we have with one another. I grew up there and I became a man on that campus. Wilberforce gave me the marketable skills necessary to compete in the workplace with anyone.

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?*

It's hard to choose just one. There were several that left a positive impact on my life. Dr. Tanya

Morah, taught me that laziness will not be rewarded or tolerated. Professor Barnes taught me the “X’s and O’s” of journalism, but the one person who really left an impact is Dr. James Arthur Williams, then Professor of Choral Music at Wilberforce. (I was a member of the Wilberforce University Choir.) Dr. Williams wasn’t afraid to challenge you. He held you accountable. He challenged you to be your best at all times. If it wasn’t for him, I wouldn’t have traveled the country performing in front of people like Bryant Gumbel and Sec. Colin Powell. We performed in Cairo, Egypt. I’m grateful for those opportunities, provided by a HBCU.



Lester Holmes looking dapper | Image Credit: Lester Holmes

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

The best restaurants were in the dorms. We had guys who would cook 7-course meals on hot plates and sell them. Our campus is located in this little town called Xenia, Ohio. But the places to eat were Perkins, Ponderosa and a buffet restaurant we went to every Sunday. I just can’t remember the name.

7. College crush?

She knows and that’s all that matters.

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

My major was Mass Media/Communications with an emphasis in Journalism. I always wanted to be a journalist in print media.

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

It would be unfair for me to divulge that information. No sense in tipping off the current administration. The current students on campus have the right to cuddle in peace.

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

You should have been a Bulldog

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

I was active in several groups and organizations. Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Xi Chapter 2nd Vice-President, Student Government Association Wilberforce University Choir “The Mirror”- Wilberforce University Newspaper WURS 88.1.” Wilberforce University Radio Black Male Coalition

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

I wasn’t nervous at all. I was a kid from the West End of Pittsburgh living out a dream.

13. If you could only speak two sentences to the youth coming after you what would you

say?

Remember that you are the caretakers of a powerful legacy. Honor that legacy by being the best individual and student you can be.

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