



Mariah Campbell, Texas Southern University- c/o 2022, Journalism/Public Relations



Name : Mariah Campbell

Your HBCU : Texas Southern University

Graduation Year : 2022

Major : Journalism/Public Relations

Minor : Business Administration

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

I'm originally from Longview, Texas but I moved to Houston, Texas when I was younger. As a kid, my favorite show was a "A Different World", which essentially follows the lives of students at a fictional HBCU called Hillman College. This introduced me to HBCU's. I loved the show and I loved how each character had aspirations to gain an education while promoting their history within the social and political issues at that time. I knew that's something that I wanted to do!



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

In all honesty, I didn't choose to go to an HBCU when I first started searching for colleges. I'm a first generation college student so a lot of my decisions and advisement leaned on the public school system. I went to a predominantly black high school in which they encouraged all promising athletes and intelligent scholars to apply to the "prestigious" white institutions. Going to a PWI was considered our "way out". Not having much knowledge on how the whole process worked, I did. Before I was about to commit to a school, I was introduced to Texas Southern University by the SGA president at the time, Aaron Dallas, and he basically told me all of the great things offered at an TSU. His comments were the exact opposite of what others had told me about HBCU's so I decided to try it out! I went to meet the Honors College staff during the summer to solidify my decision. I stepped on that campus and it felt like home! Out of all of the PWI campuses I had visited, I never felt the presence of love and comfort like I did on the campus of TSU (and nobody was even there yet, lol). I knew in that moment, that an HBCU is where I needed to be and to this day, I don't regret my decision!

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

The school's history comprised with my personal experience proves Texas Southern University to be the school of opportunity. Our school was initially founded as "The Houston Colored Junior College" back in 1927. This college offered an opportunity for African Americans to gain college experience in a city where their options were limited. Over 93 years and four name changes later, our school still provides opportunities to its students! Texas Southern offers programs like

Summer of Success (SOS) to help students academically, study abroad programs, scholarships, etc.. Anything to ensure the success of each student...TSU is willing to do it! I've also had professors and staff members offer me opportunities for scholarships and internships. Texas Southern University will do what it takes to see us succeed and this is value that it has had since the beginning. That is what makes my institution and my experience so great!

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

One of my first time experiences was HOMECOMING! I had never been to a HBCU homecoming before coming to Texas Southern. Everything about Homecoming week spoke of the culture of an HBCU! The events, the band, the people...it was like nothing I had seen before! It was an exciting time to meet alumni and gather together to live in the pride of our school. Resting in the comfort of Texas Southern and the Third Ward community, made room for a great time of fun, laughter, and networking!

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

I'm a firm believer in "it takes a village". I can't credit just one professor because many have played a vital role in my journey. The staff of the Thomas F. Freeman Honors College really poured into me academically, financially, and even personally since I started at TSU. Dr. Thomas F. Freeman, impacted my life more than he will ever know. Speaking with him about life and purpose changed my life for the better! Dr. Michon Benson-Marsh taught me the African American history that often times goes unheard which improved my outlook on life as a black woman in America. Professor Serbino Sandifer-Walker introduced me to the world of journalism and helped guide me in choosing a career. The list could go on! There are so many pieces to this puzzle that I could literally write a book full of names! I'm grateful to all of my professors because they each brought something unique to my life that I will forever cherish!



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

I serve as the 2020-2021 Miss Junior, Co-Director of Campus PALS, a Residential Assistant (RA), and Honors College Recruitment Chair.

7. How did you approach the writing of your college application essay?

When writing college applications, I would say don't be afraid to show them your heart. For any scholarship essay or college app essay I wrote, I put my heart into each essay and I always got complimented on them. Don't ever shy away from your life's story. I'm not saying to have your essay full of "woe is me" stories to gain pity but to incorporate those sad stories with ways that you triumphed. That shows the reader that you have had adversity but you are determined enough to overcome them.

8. What advice would you give to other high school students thinking about their future?

I would say that if you're in high school and thinking about the future, don't put so much pressure on yourself. In today's society, there's the pressure to "secure the bag" or start your career quickly. I encourage you to take out time to figure out what makes you happy. Don't rush to plan out every detail of your future because sometimes life takes you down roads that you never intended to go down. Live in the moment and experience the gifts of each day then your future will create itself. But obsessing over what the future holds will only leave you anxious.