



## **Mark Taylor, Florida A & M University- c/o 2011, Public Policy and Administration**



**Name :** Mark Taylor

**Your HBCU :** Florida A & M University

**Graduation Year :** 2011

**Major :** Public Policy and Administration

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

My HBCU had a state-of-the art newsroom and received industry awards for journalism and public relations that far exceeded many of the other institutions within the region. Soon after I discussed my decision with some friends in the Florida area, I found that many of them had ties to FAMU and they decided to invite me to a few socials and networking events with FAMU Alumni. I saw that they were like a family. Being thousands of miles away from home in the Midwest, I was excited to get that feeling all over again. I went to the Florida Football Classic and later visited the campus grounds to see the faculty and learn about what it had to offer and FAMU scored even more points. So in essence, the programs it had to offer, its notoriety among my professional industry and the family-like atmosphere are what made me sign the dotted line on FAMU's application.



FAMU's School of Journalism and Graphic Communications where Public Relations is housed

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

Prior to conducting my research, my perception of HBCUs was flawed. In all honesty, my original intentions were not to attend an HBCU because I felt I would not have attained a level of diversity in meeting people and engaging in various experiences of different cultures. However, there came a time when I decided to change my major to Public Relations (from Marketing) and after doing research on the best schools in the region I was living in, I was astounded to hear that FAMU was one of the top choices.

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

My experience at FAMU started with building relationships with many FAMUans from the moment I became interested in the university until now. I was always in-the-know and I was always a point of contact for information and getting the word out about exclusive things and effective ideas. FAMU gave me the opportunity to network and successfully compete for national and regional industry awards as a student. My leadership as a student in the FAMU Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, the FAMUAN newspaper, PProdigy Public Relations Firm, and other student organizations and media were priceless and provided real-world opportunities to work

with great businesses, well-known government agencies and celebrities.

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

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

They all had a positive impact on me as an individual ... even those professors that I didn't like or that I had bad dealings with. If I had to say which professors at FAMU left the most impression on me as a student, I'd have to say both Dr. LaRae Donnellan and Professor Gina Kinchlow. I was excited to attend their classes in public relations and enjoyed demonstrating what I learned to them and my peers. Dr. Donnellan showed me the value of teamwork, ethics and instilled public relations methods of success through proper measurement and procedures. Professor Kinchlow brought a down-to-earth approach to her lessons and a no-nonsense culture in the classroom and the student-run PR firm she advised. It hasn't been very long since I graduated, but both of their hard lessons, gestures and quotations stick with me to this very day along with several other public relations alumni from the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication (SJGC). In fact, it's often through their lessons that I am the distinction between what is the better choice among others in my field. Those professors and SJGC itself created an atmosphere that I, along with other alumni, can't forget and can always seem to bond with even after graduating.



Rodigy Public Relations Firm operated by FAMU Students and lead by Gina Kinchlow; Mr. Taylor,

#### **6. What sports and/or extra curricular activities did you do in High School? And why?**

The hiss (gesture and sound) ... Which is indescribable by words. Start at the 2:01 Mark to see the Hiss (Gesture and Sound)

#### **7. Best restaurants on/near campus? Best dishes?**

Oh wow... seems simple but you're asking for a lot for a foodie, but in the interest of time and space, I'll give you just a few. Harry's Seafood Bar & Grille for a nice dining atmosphere, date, celebration or just to get some good Cajun inspired food. One of my favorites is the Shrimp & Scallop Oleans with a Grit Cake topped w/ Tasso Sauce; California Chicken Grill/Chubby's, or Wing Zone for that late night snack or after-the club munchies rush, and Olean's for that affordable, great-tasting, down-to-earth soul food cooking that you can't really get on campus for breakfast (or even lunch or dinner). Olean's made me say "I love the South" several times because of the food and the friendly atmosphere of the lady that owns the restaurant.

## **8. College crush?**

I don't really think I had one.

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