



## **Rahkal Shelton, Texas Southern University- c/o 2007, Communications with a Concentration in Broadcast Media**



**Name :** Rahkal Shelton

**Your HBCU :** Texas Southern University

**Graduation Year :** 2007

**Major :** Communications with a Concentration in Broadcast Media

**Minor :** Film

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

I am originally from Chicago and was introduced to HBCU via the Tom Joyner Morning Show. Every morning, my senior year in high school I would listen to the TJMS. They visited a different HBCU every Friday and broadcasted live. This is what unofficially kicked off my career in broadcast media and communications at an HBCU.



T -Ssssssssssss - U - U -U !!!! I thought you knew Biiiiiii

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

I wanted to be a part of the rich and luxurious culture of an HBCU. I knew to be in a safe environment where I could thrive and have a family feeling was important especially being so far away from home. Additionally, I was a fan of a different world and enjoyed watching what I imagined an HBCU to be like.

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

My experience was definitely book worthy. In 2016, I released my debut memoir titled Dreams Bigger Than Texas which highlights my growth into womanhood and experience at Texas Southern University. As a first-generation college student, It was important for me to succeed and to set the bar for my family. My experience at TxSU did that. It was filled with invaluable life lessons that I couldn't have gotten anywhere else. Many lessons included: family, loyalty, being organized resourceful and resilient. I had an extended home away from home.

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

Deciding whether I should attend my classes or the parties on the yard every Friday: greek life, the bands, sports and participating in collegiate extracurricular activities. I experienced being a sports reporter, resident assistant, multi-scholarship recipient, Ms. Senior campus queen, student film director, National Association of Black Journalism conference attendee, features in several local papers, a commercial that I directed, filmed and edited on local television, and interning in

LA with a prestigious radio and television show. I volunteered and became more culturally aware, voted for the first time and went on to do great things at and post TSU.

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

Comedian and Radio Show host Marcus Wiley was a key professor to my TSU experience. Also, Dr. Poudeh who was my advisor and now the department chair. Both believed in me and challenged me to be better by encouraging me to go for opportunities and guiding/mentoring me as I navigated through college.



Rahkal C. D. Shelton - Author/Mentor/CEO - Proud HBCU ALUM

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

The cafe served fried fish and spaghetti on Fridays! It was so good!! I definitely gained the freshmen 15 probably within 6 months of being at TSU. All the food was cooked and seasoned to perfection.

**7. Your wildest moment at college?**

One of the girls from the dorm had a dad (freshman year) who was a well-known stripper. He owned a very popular strip club in Houston. He would have her sliding flyers under everyone's door to help him promote. So one night we all decided to go since everyone was 18. No one had a car or money truly. Nevertheless, we all got dressed in our most skimpiest clothing we could find. We begged one of the local girls who had a truck to take us. We piled in the back of a pickup truck with no seat belts and all our ass out trying to look cute. We didn't get far as we were hit by a possible drunk driver who fled. One of the girls were hurt bad causing us to be at a freezing cold emergency room underdressed and hoping our parents weren't contacted. It was a crazy night.

**8. What life-changing books would you recommend to others to read?**

I would recommend students to read "Dreams Bigger Than Texas", an inspiring story of a young woman born to a 19 year old drug addict into drugs, violence, and poverty. She exceeds her mother's expectations of getting a GED by being the first to go off to college. She goes away experiencing the rich cultural, and life-changing atmosphere of a historical black university in Texas, she evolves, gains confidence and develops the desire to impact culture. Dreams Bigger Than Texas ISBN-978-0-692-71873-5

**9. When and how did you discover your passion in life?**

I discovered my passion while mentoring youth in underserved communities on the South Side of Chicago.

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

**say?**

1. Success is a result of doing what you know you need to do and doing it daily - being consistent.
2. Spend your time wisely. There is always tomorrow for my perfectionists and for my procrastinators tomorrow isn't promised.

**11. How did your HBCU help you to transition into your careers workforce?**

The exposure to different opportunities helped me and the network of friends, mentors and support systems.