



Shan'tell Brown, Alabama State University- c/o 2001, Music Education



Name : Shan'tell Brown

Your HBCU : Alabama State University

Graduation Year : 2001

Major : Music Education

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

I am from and I live in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. And I first learned of HBCUs in high school. I was in the marching band in high school, and our band director was a Florida A&M Univ. alumni. And for Florida A&M's homecoming he would take our band on a field trip to compete with other high school bands during the Florida A&M Univ homecoming game.



Shan'tell Brown a proud Alumnus of Alabama State University, Class of 2001 | Image Credit: Shan'tell Brown

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

Honestly ever since I was very young when my mother had more say in what schools she enrolled me in, she choose predominantly white schools. My mother felt and even to this day she feels that the quality of education offered in white school is more advanced than that of predominantly black schools. In the process of attending white schools I found myself dealing with racial controversy. SO by the time I got into the 3rd grade I told my mother wanted to go to the private school she enrolled me in, and I asked that she enroll me in the school that was most African-American. Although I am not gonna lie I still found myself dealing with racial controversy with blacks as well for being quote on quote "Too white" because I spoke in correct English and not much ebonics. Which had me even more confused as a child. It can fluster a young child's mind to find themselves not being accepted for being blacks by whites, and then find themselves not being accepted by blacks for acting quite on quote "Too white" But despite all of this I knew I never wanted to attend white schools. [Why did you choose Alabama State University?] Back in Aug of 1991 I saw the campus for the first time, and I just knew Alabama State Univ. was the school I wanted to attend. I knew for certain that the two HBCUs that most of the students I attended high school with was NOT the colleges I wanted to go to (I am referring to Florida A&M, and Bethune-Cookman Univ. which was Bethune-Cookman College at the time)

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

N/A

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?*

The professors I vividly remember are Dr. Joel Jones (the ASU choir director) and Dr. Pamela Burns (my voice instructor) There are a few other professors I remember but I had dealings with them the most, so... [What did they do that continues to mean so much to you to this day?] A lot of things. I learned a lot in regards to the subject of my lessons. I was just referring to Dr. Burns. As for Dr. Jones. I enjoyed being a part of the Univ. choir. Had it not been for the choir I would have never had the chance to visit cities we have gone to. The choir went to Atlanta, Milwaukee, Las Vegas. Oh and the choir also visited downtown Chicago. Not to mention. I have been on a white college campus versus a black college campus, and there is just something that I just cannot explain that is there on black college campuses that is Not there on white campuses.

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

My Freshman year they had this burger restaurant in the student Union. Although I honestly forgot the name of the burger restaurant because it was closed down not long after I got there and was converted into a McDonald's. [What was your favorite burger to order?] Just a regular hamburger and fries, nothing special. LOL But I was eating there too much I was finding myself becoming broke, so eventually I had to settle on eating in the campus cafeteria.

7. College crush?

Oh man Shawn Blackmon. I had a HUGE crush on him for about a month my first semester on campus. Shawn was all I talked about around my roommate and her friends, and my roommate encouraged me to ask him to go steady with me, and I did. He turned me down. But that was ok. A month later I met another guy I liked so much more His name was Ed Cutts. I found myself falling in love with Ed. Ed lived in the honor dorms. So in Friday nights I would spend the whole night with him in his room.. Memories. Yeah I fell in Love. He didn't of course, but I did.

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

Music Education was what I earned my bachelor's in. I choose that field because even though I wanted to really be in entertainment I was and I still am aware that the entertainment industry is a tough profession to break into. And I knew I had to take care of myself after college, so I decided to major in a field that still had to do with music while at the same time making a living for myself.

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

For other students on the campus they went where ever they could find a nice private spot. Some folks were able to go into dorm rooms, and others had cars. And some folks lived off campus.

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

AS AS AS AS UUUUUUUUUU!!!!!! Although honestly I did not bother going to any football games nor sport events until after I graduated from Alabama State. Now for the last three years I return back to Alabama (Birmingham, Al) for the Magic City Classic during the last week in Oct.

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

I was active in the University choir and the Voices of Praise Choir (called V.O.P. for short) I was a charter member of the Alabama State Univ chapter of the N.C.N.W. (The National Council of Negro Women, Inc.) And on late Thurs mornings I would go to one of the local churches near the campus and serve food to the homeless that were in the neighborhood near the campus. In high school the marching band took up most of my time.

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

After having the experience of student teaching at public schools before I graduated from college, I overcame being nervous in front of a classroom full of kids.

13. How did your HBCU prepare you for a diverse workplace?

Honestly, it never really did. Shoot white campuses do not do the same thing either. I tried going to grad school at a white college in Miami, (Florida International Univ.) again just was not feeling being at a white college. Honestly while I was attending Florida International Univ I did NOT experience any racism. But the campus life was just NOT like campus life on a black campus. Greek life was NOT the same. Greeks: 0 On a black college campus I was used to seeing a whole bunch of Deltas, and AKAs, and quite a bit of my sorors (Zetas). But on a white campus its the opposite. Black Greeks are in small numbers on white campuses.

14. What advice would you give high school students filling out college applications for the first time?

I try to give advice early to students because getting accepted into colleges now is a lot harder than it was 20 years ago when I applied. And the reason being more students across the country and across the globe for that matter are applying which allows for colleges to become more pickier in regards to who they will chose to attend their institutions. But when I do talk with kids about college, and tell them now is the time to keep their grades up for college because getting into college is NOTHING like getting into a public school where ur parent can just walk in the office sign u up and u are in. And I Also tell them to do their best on the required tests they must take to get into college and to stay out of trouble becuase colleges look at EVERYTHING when it comes to choosing who they want to attend their institutions. Focus on your studies and NOT the chicks (or dudes) running the campus. And keep up with everything required to graduate from that particular college or univ.

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

It helped me to prepare for the profession I was earning my degree in through the class subjects I

was required to take, and my having to literally learn the subjects I was required to take towards my field.

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