



Sherman Hawkins, Johnson C. Smith University- c/o 2012, Criminology



Name : Sherman Hawkins

Your HBCU : Johnson C. Smith University

Graduation Year : 2012

Major : Criminology

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

I am from a small town called Halifax in the state of Virginia. I have known about HBCU's my whole entire life because both my parents attended an HBCU (St. Paul's College)



Sherman doing his part for the Global Majority community as a member of the Iota Phi Theta Fraternity | Image Credit: Sherman Hawkins

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

Many reasons like I was in marching band and when I went to HBCU homecomings I would always picture myself breaking it down on the field during Half-time and also because I wanted to experience how it would feel like to be at a HBCU. I decided to attend Johnson C. Smith University because of the band, the location which is in the heart of Charlotte, NC., I liked how JCSU set up their classrooms and how the professor would know your name and that you are not like a number. And also because JCSU provided their students with laptops to help with their studies.

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

My experience was Wonderful. I wouldn't have changed anything about it in the world. I went to my HBCU for 4 years, Did Marching band and concert band for all 4 years. I pledged into a fraternity my junior year (Iota Phi Theta). Made outstanding friends and learned a lot about myself as a black man and as a future leader in my community.

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

To many firsts to name. :)

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

This is a hard question to answer because all of my professor helped shaped me into the person I am today but if I had to pick it would be Dr. Davenport because I remember back in my freshmen year I was slacking off and she pulled me to the side and told me this: "You need to get it together

before I call your mama because you slacking off". I'm forever grateful for Dr. D for doing that because if I didn't get myself together I probably would have failed out of college. Today Dr. Davenport is still a professor at Johnson C. Smith University and when I come visit the campus I make sure I at least try to stop by to say hello and she still gives me wisdom on life and encourages me to continue to work hard and succeed in my life.



English Professor, Dr. Davenport of Johnson C. Smith University | Image Credit: flickr.com

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

For a short time I ran track because I loved to run epically the 800. And also I was in Marching, and Concert Band in high school and I just loved music.

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

Cookout!!! I would always get the chicken tender tray with hush puppies and fries with a Huge Sweet Tea with BBQ Sauce.

8. College crush?

Can't tell you that....she might be reading this :-).

9. Ghost stories involving buildings or spots on campus?

Yea, They said a woman hung herself in the bell section of Biddle Hall and at a certain time of night you can see her....but I didn't see her.

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

My major was Criminology. It was close to Criminal justice and it was something about the study of the Criminal mind that I've always found interesting since I was 8 years old. (More Criminal Justice Majors).

11. What to date has been your proudest moment @ Your HBCU?

When I crossed those burning sands by myself (SOLO) with no LB's from the beginning to the end into my frat. Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. in Spring 2011.

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

Hmm it was the benches near the tennis court where you can sit and watch the beautiful city of Charlotte skyline....but the benches are gone now.

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

When the Band started them at the football and basketball games!!!

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

I was in marching band all for 4 years so that took up most of my time and on my senior year I was the president of the Iota's so I was just busy busy busy.....no free time and I loved it.

15. Where is the "yard" located?

In my opinion it was on the Block or "The Plaza" (that's what it is called now)

16. What and where are the historical places on campus?

Some of the dorms like Carter Hall, Duke Hall, but the greatest historical place on campus was and still is Biddle Hall!!!

17. What to date has been your saddest moment at your HBCU?

I would have to say getting dumped by the woman I really cared about.

18. What situation in your life made you feel like you had arrived into woman/manhood?

When I started to pay my own bills like student loans, rent, car payments, ect.

19. How do you deal with racism when you encounter it?

I just ignore it when I'm out in public because I believe in GOD and I believe he does not like ugly so I would let him fight that battle for me but if I was in any physical danger well that is a different story.

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

When I was 8 years old. And by watching family members that were in law enforcement and I was like I want to be just like or better than that family member.

21. What's your take on life (in the philosophical sense)?

This quote: "Hardship often prepares an ordinary person for an extraordinary destiny." ? C.S. Lewis

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

When me and my good college friend Bishop Walker started a group on Facebook called Johnson C. Smith University class of 2012 group in which all the students that were coming in at the same time as us we all could connect and get to know each other....that kinda help cut down my nervousness when I got there Fall 2008

23. Are you a member of a fraternity?

I pledged Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. from the Beta Theta Chapter in Spring 2011 and you ask why...well because I wanted to build a tradition, not rest upon one and also the brothers there

before I joined showed me how they fellowship together and even invited me to events/cookouts so I knew it was something I wanted to be apart of my sophomore year. And I also saw them do a lot of community service off and on campus.

24. If you could speak to those family members that have risen but that live forever through you, what words would you speak?

I would tell them that I love them and that I hope that I am making each and every one of you proud.

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

By giving me the knowledge that I would need in order to go into the field I desired, showing me how to network with people.

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

Don't go to college just to party. Go get that education because your parents, tax payers, and ect. are paying for you to succeed in life so make us all proud.

27. If you could only speak two sentences to the youth coming after you what would you say?

Go to school and stay focused with your studies. Always strive for your dreams because you can make them happen.

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

By the internship opportunities that were offered and given. Workshops like helping to work on resumes and interviews.