



Tia Bolden, Savannah State University- c/o 2017, Electrical Engineering



Name : Tia Bolden

Your HBCU : Savannah State University

Graduation Year : 2017

Major : Electrical Engineering

Minor : Education

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

A native of Decatur, Georgia, my name is Tia C. Bolden. I was first introduced to HBCU's by my mother, Mordena Bolden who is a Howard University Alum and my father who received Baseball Scholarship from NC A&T.



In 2013, I got accepted into Georgia Tech and was told I couldn't play softball & major in engineering.. so I took my talents to Savannah State. Graduated in 2017.. Began my career at NASA in 2018 & in 2019 I'm receiving my Masters in Engineering...

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

In 2013, my senior year of High School I was accepted into Georgia Tech. As an engineer, this was an exciting and rare accomplishment. From my elementary days, I had always dreamed of playing softball in college on my way to becoming an engineer. In High School, I was honored as Top Player in DeKalb county two years in a row, MVP and Top 80 in the state of Georgia; so I thought sure at the college level, this will be an opportunity to continue the milestones. When I took a tour visit to Georgia Tech and met with the Softball coaches to discuss my major and ambitions, I was immediately told "Oh, you can't major in engineering and play softball." My father then pulled up the softball roster to display players on the team who were engineering majors. (They were all Asian or White). The coached looked at us and said "Yes, I understand but I don't think you'll be able to maintain the softball schedule and compete while majoring in Engineering. It can get very tough." After the visit, my father told me not to become discouraged, because there will always be someone who doubts you when they fear your potential. A few months later, I ventured to tour Savannah State University where the softball team welcomed me with open arms, excited to see an ambitious new player. During this visit, we went to meet with the Dean of the College of Sciences and Technology, Dr. Jonathan Lambright. Upon meeting with Dr. Lambright, I shared with him my same ambitions and he responded: "Now, it won't be easy playing a sport and majoring in Engineering, I've never seen it completed in four years...but nothing is impossible!" This assurance showed me I was right where I belonged and this University is where God has chosen for me to be. Throughout my matriculation at Savannah State University, I was a Presidential Scholar, four-year student-athlete, Resident Assistant, College of Science and Technology Student Of The Year, Barack Obama Presidential Service Award Recipient and initiate

into the Delta Nu Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. all while maintaining a 3.5 GPA. On May 5, 2017 I graduated Magna Cum Laude from Savannah State University with my Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. Following graduation, I accepted an offer with the Boeing Company as an Electrical Manufacturing Engineer in New Orleans, Louisiana to build the NASA Space Launch Shuttle Rocket, headed to Mars. On May 11th, 2019 I received my Masters in Electrical Engineering with a concentration in Engineering Management from the University of Louisville and I can truly say I do not know where I would be today without the foundation, upbringing and experience from my HBCU. Attending Savannah State over Georgia Tech is one of the best decisions I've made because the only place hard work comes before success is in the dictionary. Thank you.

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

^ Stated in above paragraph

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

HBCU Homecoming, my first time encountering Greek Life and my First time feeling in a family setting no matter where I looked.

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

A few professors who impacted me were: Dr. Jonathan Lambright Dr. Mohamad Mustafa Dr. Dedra Andrews Dr. Jamal Tou're



Not So Hidden Figure...

6. State how your own personal experience or knowledge correlates to the Ethiopian proverbs: "Advise and counsel him; if he does not listen, let adversity teach him."

This proverb means overcome. The greatest lesson I learned at My HBCU was how to Overcome. Learning how to believe in myself and know my worth no matter what tried to break me helped shape me into the individual I am today. My HBCU experience taught me resilience, strength, understanding and true perseverance. Often times it seems like giving up or caving in is the best option, but I had to remember that if it were easy, everyone would do it. "Bend if you must, but don't break" stuck with me throughout undergrad and lives with me today, because once you know your purpose and the calling God has over your life, you will give yourself no option but to find a way, or make a way.