



Deonte Moses, Paine College- c/o 2018, English



Name : Deonte Moses

Your HBCU : Paine College

Graduation Year : 2018

Major : English

Minor : Communications

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

I am originally from Baltimore, MD. As a struggling star basketball player in High School, I ended up graduating with the lowest grade point average in the district. (1.25) Me and my family didn't really have much, so for better opportunity I decided to move with a foster parent for my senior year of High School. He agreed to let me stay with him only for a year to provide the support that I needed to be successful and hopefully land a basketball scholarship. Well of course this was unrealistic given my GPA, so as you could imagine that did not happen. I found myself in a situation where he called me to his room and we had a talk. He started with a simple question, "Well, what are you going to do? The agreement was that you could stay here for a year and get a scholarship and you aren't going to college." I didn't have an answer for him. I found myself in a situation where I had no options, and if no doors opened it was back to the floor mattress at my mothers house, or even worse. The incredibly tough streets of Baltimore where my grandmother raised me if I chose to go there for my own space. I started to feel deep depression and hopelessness, but for some strange reason I never stopped saying the routine prayer that I believe even landed me in my foster dads home. I would say this prayer every single night. The most important lines being, "Lord I don't know what this may be, but would you please guide me to be the best that I can be, and lead me to who you created me to be in this world. Don't give up on me; lead me to who I am." I kid you all not, God almighty as my witness, in the time span of three days, a United Methodist Pastor would call my foster dad randomly and ask, "Do you know any United Methodist students who would be interested in going to college?" My foster dad replied, "Well I have a kid, but I doubt you would be interested in him because he doesn't have any grades." This pastors reply would not only change my life forever, but also change the lives of those who follow me. It was simply, "Bring him down anyway." That school was the illustrious Paine College.



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

As I stated previously, Paine College was the only school to give me an opportunity. At a point while enrolled at Paine. Everyday I would find myself in somebodys office trying to get on the basketball team. I had a respectable highlight tape, and a couple semesters in I had an extremely high GPA, so I figured I definitely have a shot to play now. Well, this was not the case. Everywhere I would go the answer would always be, "No I don't think it's going to happen, the Coach said he

doesn't trust you because of your grades in high school." Because of this refusal to let me play again, I would transfer the following semester to a PWI (Geneva College) who would give me an opportunity to play. But it was clear that it wasn't in God's will, because I would hate this semester that I would spend at this school. Everyday I felt great racism from the coach and I figured, Paine was the only school who would truly believe in me, So the following semester I would immediately transfer back to the school that saved my life.

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

After my second coming and return to Paine, I would become a historical figure. Not only did I walk-on to the basketball team, make it and become a captain. I would become the first student in the history of my college to play and lead the Student Government. The following year, I would become the founder of an extremely prosperous organization called the "Devoted Disciples" where I would share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with over 40 students, through my own personal experience and stories. We created programs in the community at middle schools and local Boys & Girls Clubs. It was truly a fantastic time. None of this would have been possible for Deontè Moses anywhere else. God placed me at Paine to find purpose and to be a light to those who might come from the same humble beginnings that I came from. So if you are one of those people. Paine College is truly the place for a person like you.

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

Some major first experiences of mine would be the fight for my schools accreditation. I would become the leader in that movement for 2 years and it was truly a huge part in my personal growth. I would lead a march, say a quote that would be used in a student's senior research paper, provide students with opportunities who didn't have the GPA to fulfill certain requirements, and just give hope to the young people in a very hopeless situation. These experiences are the reason why I am the fierce leader that I am today.

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

Truly all of my professors played a huge role in me being where I am today. But if I had to choose one, it would be an early Communications professor of mine John Harris. I will never forget this scenario my freshmen year, when I got up to perform a monologue and he cut me off in the middle of it and told me to sit down; that was a disaster. At the time I was angry and felt disrespected, but as I begin to look at it logically from an educational standpoint; this is where the root of my determination to be great would stem from. Because of that criticism, it would wake a desire up in me. I became infatuated with public speaking and perfecting my craft. Through his teachings and extra time I spent working with him. I would develop into a great public speaker. That today carries on at Duke University.....



