



Janelle Williams, Cheyney University- c/o 2007, Business Marketing



Name : Janelle Williams

Your HBCU : Cheyney University

Graduation Year : 2007

Major : Business Marketing

Minor : Education

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

A native of Philadelphia, I was considered an inner city youth. I attended a public high school (which at the time ranked fifth in the city), and by all accounts was an average student. Both my parents attended college, so I knew college was the next logical step after high school. My father's side of the family attended Alcorn State University, so I knew I wanted to attend a Black college. However, when researching colleges, I was surprised to learn there were only two HBCUs in Pennsylvania, Cheyney and Lincoln. Unaware of financial aid (both parents went to school on scholarship), I did not know how I would pay for school. Being an average student, there was not anyone busting down my doors to give me scholarship money. In doing a comparison between Cheyney and Lincoln, Cheyney was made the most sense and it was a Black school, the first Black school. Cheyney promised me a home away from home that included a chance to study abroad, participate in collegiate athletics and preparation for graduate studies through an honors academy, all the while being supported by and with people who look like me. Moreover, I did not have to take out loans.



Graduation Day 2007

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

Put simply, I chose Cheyney for two reasons: 1.) Cheyney is entrenched with a significant history that is reflective of both my culture and my identity; 2.) Cheyney made a promise and commitment to my future, and as a result gave me an opportunity to pursue my goals while living out my ancestors dreams.

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

Cheyney helped me to find the value in myself. Prior to Cheyney, I was an average student, and at Cheyney, I was a Keystone Honors Scholar. I believe the positive affirmations that started Day 1, helped impress upon me to believe and understand that I was already successful; I just needed to learn a little more. I grew up wanting to be a Doctor. Cheyney told me I would be a Doctor; there was never a doubt, so I learned not to doubt myself.

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

Cheyney provided me with so many opportunities; I hope I do not forget any. I remember at one point, a student made the joke and asked me if I ever went to class because I was involved in so many activities. I took full advantage of any opportunity that Cheyney provided. I even tried out for the bowling teams and cheerleading squad, though I did not make it. Nevertheless, Cheyney gave me the confidence to try. I also ran for Miss Freshman, and Miss Cheyney but I also lost both competitions. Still I was still involved in: • Keystone Honors Academy • Track & Field/ Cross Country • Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. • School Paper Freelance Writer • Writing Tutor • Frederick Douglass Scholar + Mentor • NSMH Chapter President + National Program Director • Study Abroad- (Ghana, Africa) • Residential Advisor • Leader Shape Attendee • Sophomore Class President • Senior Class Vice President • SGCA- Social Chair • Internships with Starwood Hotel Group, Metz Foods and Sodexo • BISA Scholar (Black Women in Sisterhood for Action) • Bond-Hill Scholar • Year Book Committee • Sophomore of The Year Award And I am pretty sure I am forgetting something

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

Dr. Wesley Plummer Dr. Tara Kent Dr. Pender B. Noriega Dr. John A. Williams Dr. Eric Schumacher Cheyney gave me the tools to be a well-rounded person. In four years, I had almost every collegiate experience possible, developing skills in leadership, social networking, teambuilding, communication, writing, research, and engagement. I also has a few negative experiences that prepared me for adversity, struggle and dealing with the answer "no". I learned to love, feel, hurt, give, take, and think. Cheyney prepared me academically for graduate studies and provided financial backing to pursue those studies. In addition, it shaped my desire to work in higher education, research and study HBCUs.



DST Delta Tau Chapter

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

Remember 1...8.....3...7..... Cheyney came FIRST and Lincoln came SECOND!

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

To paraphrase Whitley Gilbert (a fictional character from a Different World), ... "You can go to school any place, but no school will love you and teach you to love yourself and know yourself like Cheyney..."

8. Are you a member of a sorority?

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc Delta Tau Chapter 14- Spring 2006

