



Joseph Beard, Jackson State University- c/o 2001, History



Name : Joseph Beard

Your HBCU : Jackson State University

Graduation Year : 2001

Major : History

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

St. Louis, MO. My father went to Jackson State, my mother to Spelman College. My maternal grandfather went to North Carolina A&T and my maternal grandmother went to Bennett.



Joseph Beard suited up playing for the "Sonic Boom" | Image Credit: Joseph Beard

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

Family tradition, and I am a BandHead so I was going to march in one of the marching bands. [How did you decide to become a student at Jackson State University?] I originally picked Johnson C. Smith to be different from the rest of my family but our band got blow out by a high school and I started to weigh my decision. The finances and the distance contributed to my decision.

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?*

I did have a first love.

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

Dr. Denoral Davis and he flunked me. I missed too many days in one of his classes and he flunked me. I tried to plead my case and he held to his guns. It was the way he did it, not in a bad way and I saw that he wanted me to do well but he could not give me anything. It made me want to make it right with him.



Joseph Beard, proud graduate of Jackson State University (Class of 2001) | Image Credit: Joseph Beard

6.

N/A

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

Track, Basketball, Band, community service. Track because my friends were into it and I won the state triple jump my senior year. Band because I played trumpet because of the marching bands I saw. Basketball because that was the popular sport in the 90's. Community service because I knew it was important.

8. College crush?

One girl in the J Settes, and one girl who was a Delta.

9. Who invited you to interview with us?

N/A

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

Jacktown Burgers, Five Happiness (far away but great chinese food)

11. Ghost stories involving buildings or spots on campus?

I don't think so.

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

History, because I loved the stories and I was good with the dates of events.

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

Graduation, marching in the Sonic Boom

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

Well back at Jackson State if you didn't have a car you could chill on the plaza or you could chill around the dorm room area. My last years there, they had co ed visitation so some people took advantage of that.

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

Fire it up J State, Rock the House, Get Ready, I'm so glad.

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

Sonic Boom, Missouri Club.

17. Where is the "yard" located?

We called all of our campus the yard, so the answer to this question is the address for Jackson State.

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

The plaza in 1970, the national guard opened fire on the campus and next to Alexander Hall is a memorial and the bullet holes are still there in the building.

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

Not pledging in 1999 because of my academics. More because I have no one to blame but myself. [What did you pledge? And why? And if not, why not?] Did not have a 2.75 and wanted to pledge Omega. Did what I could but did not pull up my grades till my senior year. Then my focus was on getting out of there. Had an opportunity the same semester I graduated and did not want to risk anything. Already accepted to graduate programs so I played my priorities, knowing I could do it later in a grad chapter.

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

My first job in my field

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

Forgiveness, what man means for evil, God means for good. Learning our history somewhat calms the situation as well.

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

Out here when I moved to California and saw that young black kids do not have the HBCU experience around them so their college decision is not as well rounded as mine was back east and being around them. At the same time I missed being around the bands and watched the videos on the internet to keep current. I then started a podcast network called The Marching Podcast that is the ESPN of marching bands and its interactive and allows the people to call in and voice their views. My plan is to create scholarships to some of these kids out here on the west coast and send them to hbcu's and help with the funding because of the distance. Check us out Sundays at 8pm EST and Tuesdays at 9pm EST. The Marching Podcast <http://themarchingpodcast.com>

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

It's harder to do the things that are better for you. It's easy to hurt yourself and others.

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

I never had any. I was raised for the college experience.

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

It made me stick my chest out about who I am in any environment. The embedded idea of success in our world looks different than I do, and at Jackson State, I saw success that looks like me. Dudes that looked and acted like me going to medical school, having 3.8 GPA's...changed my life and changed my perception of having good grades, doing the right thing, and putting on nice clothes and looking nice. Seeing these images is powerful and that is not the image that is flooded in our community. It's easy for a young man to aspire to do other things than education because it's what he sees. When I saw this representation it made me not so shy about sitting in the front of the class, or actually reading the assignment for class and being cool for your grades and not for your foolishness. You also learn that you have to have a 2.75 to be a part of anything, so you need to have good grades to do anything.

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

Do it with someone close to you, family member, your parents.

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

The hunt is on...and you are the prey!

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

Well in connection to my previous answer it allows me to communicate with other people in my voice, my mannerisms, my true self. In computers and in the classroom your communication is important and I am not trying to be something I am not in order for someone else to understand me. I am myself and I am professional, I am myself and I am intelligent. I can speak about my school and even my history with resolution to people who are different, may not understand, or may be misinformed.