

During my last semester of high school, I wrote an article for the school newspaper entitled, "What It's Like Being Black In 2015." The aftereffects were long lasting and directly led to who I am today.

To provide some context, I grew up in, Arlington, Texas. I was born into a middle-class family with two parents and one older sister. I went to mostly white schools where I was often the only black student in my advanced placement classes and was my high school's first black homecoming queen; therefore, my experience was the only black experience a lot of my classmates knew because I was expected to speak on behalf of the entire black community. My classmates saw my experience as being different than what most black people experienced. To them, I was, "not like other black kids," ... I was... *different*.

When I wrote my article, the entire school – no – the entire city was shocked. My article spoke to the racism my family had experienced, the racism I noticed at my school, and the racism I saw portrayed in the media. I lost most of my "friends" that day due to their anger and misunderstanding with what I had written.

My experience after writing the article was one of the most prevalent to date. I was able to see life more clearly now, and what became clear was that I needed to work harder to embrace what my blackness was going to look like to me. Later that year, I started my first semester at the University of Florida where I made sure to engulf myself in the black community. While there, I became a member of the first black Greek-letter sorority, I founded a community policing intervention that serves to bring together communities of color and the police officers that protect and serve them, and my interest in the legal profession grew. When it was time to decide which law schools I would apply to, I chose to apply to historically black universities because it was important for me to learn *from* teachers that look like me and be taught *with* students that look like me for the first time in my life.

The racism I experienced before *and* after writing the article were not particularly distinct. The feelings of having to be the token black student or being the spokesperson for the entire black community is not unique. What *is* unique is each and every individual black person. Though we all share the experience of being black, we are all different people with different interests and different backgrounds. I truly want to be able to share my experience and make my impact on the legal profession by being another example of what the black experience looks like; moreover, I want to become a resource to allow more people of color to diffuse their cultural experiences through the legal community because without different cultural outlooks our profession will not progress the way that it desperately needs to.

JIREH DAVIS

EDUCATION

Texas Southern University, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Houston, TX Candidate for Doctor of Jurisprudence	May 2022
Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA Candidate for Master of Business Administration in Management – Online	May 2021
University of Florida, Gainesville, FL Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and African American Studies	May 2019

RESEARCH, WORK EXPERIENCE, AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Founder, T.I.E. (Transform, Invest, Engage) Community Initiative Gainesville, FL	August 2016-Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Launched a community policing initiative that brought together the police and the community of East GainesvilleSpearheaded a carnival that involved ten student-run organizations, the three local police departments, over fifty volunteers, and commanded a crowd of 200 participants, annually	
Student Assistant, J. Wayne Reitz Union Information Desk Gainesville, FL	July 2017-December 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oversaw the dozens of daily student-led events and supervised the primary informational deskDirected over 200 visitors and prospective students per week around the Reitz Student Union	
Researcher, Graham Civic Scholars Program Clay County, FL	January 2018-May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Analyzed the critical issues pertaining to citizen's voter access to voting precincts in Clay County, FLInterviewed city officials and authored a ten-page research paper on findings submitted to the Bob Graham Center	
Student Assistant, African American Studies Department Gainesville, FL	January 2018-May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Served as a liaison between the students and the faculty in the African American Studies departmentAided the Department Program Assistant with day-to-day tasks and organized scholastic/informational documents	
Intern, Alachua County Courthouse Internship Program Gainesville, FL	January 2018-May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Observed the Alachua County Court system in the Civic, Juvenile, Traffic, Criminal, and Administrative officesCompiled more than one hundred reports, dockets, and cases to help assist the courthouse clerks	
Member, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Houston, TX	March 2018-Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Curated and facilitated six programs during a week of events as chairwoman of the organization's Spring WeekWorked on the Service and Programming Committees to coordinate and participate in 200+ hours of service/events	
Researcher, University Scholars Program Gainesville, FL	May 2018-May 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conducted social research of biased treatment of Black, Sickle Cell patients in the Gainesville, FL healthcare systemPresented my research at the 2019 National Conference of Black Political Scientists and at the University of Florida	
City Commissioner's Office Intern, City of Gainesville Bob Graham Center Gainesville, FL	August 2018-July 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Aided the Clerk of the Commissions office in hosting four city-wide events sponsored by the City CommissionersResearched the peer cities ideation methods that were used to help streamline City Commissions current process	

CERTIFICATIONS

LexisNexis, LexisNexis Advance Proficiency Certification – Legal Research	December 2019
Westlaw, Certification – Essential Legal Research & Advanced Legal Research	December 2019