

My African American Roots, My American Dreams
By Shakemia Anderson, 2016

My deep African American roots help make my Holmes County heritage rich. Decades ago when my maternal grandparents were born in Holmes County, which happens to be nestled just on the outskirts of the Mississippi Delta, my family tree began to grow heartily, winding and twisting to various parts of the United States. However, long before the family's leaves started falling outside of Holmes County; my great, great, great, great grandmother Lizzie was born. One of the children that Lizzie had is Nathaniel. Sometime after becoming a man, Nathaniel Owens Buchanan married Edith. They were the parents of ten children, but Walter Owen, my great, great grandfather is the source of my deeply embedded Holmes County roots. Per my maternal relatives, my great grandpa, Walter, was quite the family man, working diligently to do right by his family. Perseverance was the key that kept him working to keep his roots deeply set. Knowing these sturdy and deep roots run through my family's veins, it is little wonder that I am as bound and determined to be the successful lawyer and accountant that I have long dreamed of becoming.

I wholeheartedly believe that big dreams are what make this world what it is today. Becoming a successful business lawyer and making my parents proud causes me to push harder towards my hopes and my all American dreams. To dream is to live really and we often dream in our personal life. My hopes and American dreams are to have a chance to complete college and to overcome all of my fears. I expect to do very well academically and succeed at completing college and starting my adult life with my life's plans in motion. I do know that all things do not work out the way we plan them, that's all part of the unpredictability of life. Still, I am ready for

what is just for me. Knowing that I have a support system that is an intricate part of my deeply rooted African American Holmes County heritage, I steadily move forward in a positive manner.

In keeping with the strength of my long ago ancestors, my older cousin Alesha Quarles often steps in to remind me of our family's persevering nature and strong branches. The motivation she effortlessly gives gets me through long stressful days, and this also serves as a reminder of my hopes and dreams. Motivation from her is a staple in my life. Her inspirational and caring nature lets me know that the dreams and aspirations I have are not as far away as they sometimes seem. Sadly, many people cannot depend on family, but I know I can always depend on my family unit. My cousin would always tell me, "Take your time, and you will succeed." She doesn't mind telling me what's right even when I don't want to hear what she has to say. In retrospect, I know that everything she has told me was out of genuine care and love for me. Since coming to that realization, I have been doing very well in school, and I know this is the vice that I will need to do well in life in general. The more motivation I receive from that very strong family leaf, the less I think negatively.

My hope is to complete my major in law while in college by refreshing what was taught to me along the way. Completing law school will enable me to show growth in the development of learning objectives that I will constantly have to meet. Furthermore, my expectations include improving and developing better communication skills, improving my writing skills, and preparing myself for other much-needed skills in the diverse society in which we live.

Conquering the great things I see for this small town girl, at times seem a bit overwhelming, but my determination will lift me up and keep me stridently moving higher. Therefore my fear of failing at realizing my dream serves as a tiny reminder that I will become the great person that I am destined to be.

After weighing so many things, from expectations to fears and concerns, I know in my heart and mind that my African American Roots coupled with my intricately-woven Holmes County Heritage; my hopes and my all American dreams will come to fruition because I have decided to stick with it!