

Dress the part be the part

Society tells us that we should behave a certain way, dress a certain way and think a certain way.

I've never been someone to just go along or do what's expected. I don't worry about what others think. I don't have to be the most popular, the smartest or the center of attention. I'm content to live doing what feels right to me, whether it's compatible with what society thinks is appropriate or not.

**ALICIA
BAYAT
FINDING
MY VOICE**

I'm the go-to person when things need to be fixed or changed. It's difficult to strip away that image of me being the person who will come through or who "can get it done." People come to me with expectations. They don't come to me because I dress in a uniform socially acceptable way. They don't come to me because I say the right things or behave the right way.

I have struggled this past year to shed those expectations, and to just be free.

People come to me because over time and through experience they have come to realize I can be an asset, because I'm capable. They look past my pierced face. They look past the myriad of very obvious tattoos. They even look past the dark makeup and the purple hair. They don't decide because of my gender or sexual orientation.

I didn't get my foot in the door by compromising my integrity or myself. I got my foot in the door by my willingness to be heard, and work hard.

I'm not saying be out of control and don't follow any rules, but some rules are meant to be challenged, if not broken. Don't be afraid to question the status quo. Don't be afraid to question traditions. Sometimes things need to change.

I remember sitting in Dr. Twumasi-Ankrah's office one day early in the semester and I asked him if he would have a problem hiring me because of my appearance. He didn't hesitate or stop to think about my question. He told me "absolutely not," Because what is important are my capabilities and not what I look like.

If someone I choose to work for can't find my appearance acceptable it is likely not a place I would feel comfortable working. If I can't be myself, it is not the job for me.

Think about it. FSU has a reputation in the community. Who we are we kidding? The community doesn't know all of the positive things FSU contributes to the community. They don't know about the programs which helps students have a competitive edge in their chosen fields. All they know is that it's "on the Murch" and that people that come out of FSU lack sophistication and seem globally impaired. It's the school where people go when they can't get in anywhere else. Why

... the community is overlooking all those extraordinary students that will overcome the image and blaze their own trails, because they chose to be different."

should anyone take us seriously?

I have been asked more often than not why I would choose to work for a paper that is associated with FSU.

My take is that for all those squeaky wheels that give FSU a bad name, the community is overlooking all the extraordinary students who will overcome the image and blaze their own trails, because they chose to be different.

There is an obvious disconnect between FSU and the community. In many ways it has always been a self-imposed isolation. It's important to be proud that FSU is a Historically Black University (HBCU), but don't allow that to become a liability instead of an asset. Respect the culture and history, but grow and evolve. It's as important to learn to look outside of ourselves and not just within our comfort zones.

If the university wants to change its image

it needs to modernize, and realize that dressing people up in little suits, telling them what to say and how to say it isn't as important and being able to look outside of the university, connecting with the community and the world.

I have heard Chancellor Anderson mention on several occasions that his goal is globalized students.

Think about it. Earlier this year the career-center held a workshop where students told they should wear these outdated outfits. Image is important to a large degree, but the wrong image can say just as much about you as the right one.

I was always told to dress for the occasion. I'm not going to wear a business suit to class, or a cocktail dress to a barbecue. So why tell students to wear stuffy ill fitting, outdated outfits, stockings, and heels to interviews. If it isn't comfortable and doesn't feel right, it's very likely not right. The employer will notice.

Get a backbone, find yourself, be comfortable in your own skin and people will notice you for what you can do.

TRENDING TOPICS

Out comes the sun

By Briana Murrell
Voice Staff Writer

The Spring Break of 2011, now just a memory in our minds. No matter how enjoyable or unexciting, it's a thing of the past. Class is back in session. March 20th marked the first official day of spring. Daylight Savings Time ushered in longer days and shorter nights. Convertible owners are dropping their tops, ice cream shops' business is booming, and flowers are blossoming, making their well-awaited appearances.

It's spring time! The season where "March winds bring April showers to grow the May

flowers." With the temperature slowly but surely rising day by day, Fayetteville State students express what this means to them.

#Warmer Weather means ...

"... the pool opens and the fun begins."
Shakja Belcher, Freshman

"... ashy feet."
Jeremy Dunlap, Sophomore

"... not going to class."
Matthew Fields, Senior

"... better fashion."
Marquis Graham, Sophomore

"... FUN!"
Isong Idio, Sophomore

"... lots of pollen!"
Zach Johnson, Senior

"... good times."
Jasalynn Nesbitt, Freshman

"... no jackets."
Michele Nixon, Sophomore

"... more time outside and less time in your room."
Shalise Sheppard, Graduate Student

"... less clothes."
Tia Squires, Senior

"... booty shorts."
Tyler Watson, Freshman

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