



courtesy of Dennis McNair
Voice Staff from Left to Right: Alisha Murphy; Aaron Williams; Eldon Alford Jr.; DeSean Lawson; Ta'Meka Breland; Jalynn Jones; Dr. Andrea Baker, Adviser; Charnell Harris, Managing Editor; Center: Jennifer Lucas, Editor-in-Chief

May 5 is rapidly approaching and pretty soon students will start packing up their belongings and turning in those heavy textbooks, as we all head home for the summer. For some, this summer will be filled with fun and excitement. For those of you who will graduate on May 5, it's a mixture of excitement and nerves. Excited to have finished school, but nervous about the next step.

This year we all witnessed many major changes on campus. The Greek plots moving to make way for the new Science and Technology building, to the return of sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho. Students protested in the same courtyard where many of you recently stood behind a podium and addressed your peers for student elections. Crowds packed the Seabrook to see Civil Rights icon, Angela Davis. As well as many of you cheered for the return of hometown artist, J. Cole. These are just a few of the great things we've all had a chance to witness here at FSU.

By this time next year, FSU will almost be unrecognizable, but this is just the beginning of something great. The truth is that the university is working to make sure that by the time we graduate, our degree will be worth something, so if change is needed then we must ready ourselves for it, because change is inevitable.

A question asked a lot this year from fellow students was "Do you think FSU is really going to prepare me for after graduation?" and my answer to them is always the same. No, it won't. Simply going to FSU or any college for that matter will not get you ready for the real world. It takes a lot of getting involved, stepping outside of one's comfort zone, and determination to make it in this world.

This summer, The Voice challenges everyone to really think about what they can do to improve their chances for success and to get started on them right away. Time and success waits for no one, not even on summer break.

Congratulations to the Graduating Class of 2012! And to everyone else, have a great summer vacation.

The Voice

Dear Journalism and Mass Communication Students:

I've always tried to live my life according to these Cleo Laine lyrics.

"There's a saying... good things... always come to those who wait."

I came from a Boston lower-income neighborhood where as teens we had to make the most of what we had quickly because time, attitudes, people who thought of us as numbers instead of human beings and just plain life would most likely get in the way and change the value of what we had into something less or nothing at all.

"But, you could miss... a real good thing... if you stop too long to hesitate."

So, I became the youngest newspaper editorial writer in the country before I hit my late 20s. Then, I parlayed my knowledge of journalism into jobs producing documentaries for Discovery Channel, creating commercials for Paramount Studios, handling marketing for companies like Sony, and helping politicians into political office.

While many black TV writers took the seemingly easier route into black sitcoms, I stuck it out and succeeded intermittently in science fiction, creating an alien race for Star Trek Voyager, and then becoming a staff writer for the ill-fated The Burning Zone.

"I'm gonna taste just a little bit before it's all over."

People in journalism and Hollywood come in all colors; and most have been good to me. So, then, like more writers, I decided to give back. I went to NYU Tisch School of the Arts to get my MFA so that I could become a writer-producer-professor and give back to people like me.

Why are you, my students, like me? You're military, like many I covered in the high desert and one Vietnam Vet who taught me how to skydive solo. You're blended. I'm a Black Mississippi Choctaw Latina. And just as many of you have seen friends murdered, my brother was murdered by authorities when he was 14 and I was 13.

In terms of students, this university has blacks, latinos, whites, the military, poor folks and some not so poor. All like me... at various stages of my life.

"I'm gonna do what they tell me not to. So, you'd better move over."

I found you to be bright, warm-hearted, fun, and witty in spite of the fact that most of you were never given a fair shot or a good K-12 education. What I didn't find, what I haven't found, and what I haven't yet discovered was a way to engender in you a belief that education will reap rewards and line the path to the futures you crave and deserve.

I tried to instill hope while educating by weaving in life stories with instruction. And then, I remembered that my belief in myself did not come from my teachers or my college peers. It came from my parents, my relatives, my community... everything that made me me way before college.

"I'm gonna drink the wine, before life passes by."

I hope that the projects I created (Dateline Fayetteville, The Fayetteville Observer Internships, The THQ VideoGame mentorships, the daily free newspapers, The First Feature Film series kickstarted by the Millstone free screening of Morning Glory (thanks J.J. Abrams) and the J-Student White House Invitational 2012, the student jobs and internship Facebook site Media 4 Us) kickstarted your faith in some small way.

But, seriously, it all starts with you. I know that because you students are the reason I did not "miss a real good thing" here.. Why? Because, with a "Dent!", "Hi, Miss Dent." "Professor Dent, hey!" you stopped... and hesitated outside my office door.

So, as I leave, my one note of advice is... don't follow the example of your peers. Don't follow the example of your parents. Don't follow the example set by administrators or professors or reality stars or music icons or me.

Follow your heart. Follow what's inside of you. Ignore obstacles of lesser gods and lesser minds. Get to the doin'. As for me, I'm off to, once again, live the rest of Laine's lyrics:

"I'm gonna drink the wine and if I don't make it, you can't say that I didn't try!"

Dent In The Knight Skye

Disclaimer: Cleo Laine used "wine" as a metaphor



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