

A Desire to Pay it Forward

“I came to West Virginia my sophomore year of high school and was not even thinking about where I would attend college. My junior year, I was invited to the Outstanding Black High School Students’ Weekend, currently known as the Intercultural Students’ Weekend, hosted by Maurice Cooley at Marshall University. After that weekend, I knew I was going to attend Marshall. It was the only school I actually applied to my senior year,” said Porscha DeWitt, a Columbus, Georgia, native who moved to Princeton, West Virginia, at the age of 15.

Marshall University’s Intercultural Students’ Weekend is a two-day event that provides the opportunity for students to explore Marshall’s campus, interact with the deans of the college that the student is interested in studying and meet current and potential students.

“After the (introductory) dinner, we were split up by our majors to see our dean of the college. I was a first semester junior in high school and did not know much about college, so talking with the dean in a small group was helpful,” explained Porscha, adding that they also were fortunate to take a campus tour, listen to and ask questions to a panel of minority Marshall students and participate in all night bonding exercises at the Rec.

“Saturday, we were asked to dress business professional for an awards ceremony. A group photo was taken and the weekend was over. Luckily there was a football game at ‘The Joan’ (Joan C. Edwards Stadium) that weekend and we were given tickets,” she said. “Mr. Cooley assisted in any way he could that weekend. He set the bar high and made Marshall my top pick.”



Fun Facts

Class of 2019

Major: Political Science with a minor in communication studies

Hometown: Columbus, Georgia/
Princeton, West Virginia

Favorite color: Purple

Favorite thing about Huntington: The restaurants are my favorite thing about Huntington. I am from Princeton, and there are maybe three good restaurants, but in Huntington, there are so many options.

Favorite place off campus: My apartment. It is cozy and where I spend most of my time if I am not at work or class.

A Desire to Pay it Forward (continued)

Crediting the laid back environment as part of the charm of Marshall, she said she enjoyed seeing how the students interacted at the first football game she attended in helping persuade her to enroll at Marshall.

Majoring in political science with a minor in communication studies, Porscha will graduate in May of 2019 and intends to begin law school in the fall. She looks forward to learning how to apply what she has learned at Marshall throughout life to make a difference in communities.

“Marshall provides a great learning environment and I could not picture myself going through undergraduate (school) anywhere else,” Porscha said. “The professors and fellow students have made it easier for me to be a political science student. I have always had a familiar face in my classes and professors would converse with me on campus.”

Porscha is involved in the Pre-Law Club and serves on the advisory council for the Society of Black Scholars. Consisting of seven members, the advisory council assists Cooley, who is associate vice president for intercultural affairs, with the introduction process of Society of Black Scholars applicants.

“We conduct interviews with applicants and we ultimately decide if [they] will be admitted into the society. We are required to present a presentation at each monthly refresher on any topic we would like, but typically, we like to highlight dress code and etiquette,” explained Porscha. “The advisory council’s main purpose is to oversee and help guide the society. My role is to lend a helping hand to any member in need and try to be a helpful colleague to them.”

Considering it an honor to be chosen as a member of the Society of Black Scholars Advisory Council, Porscha says remarkable people whom she can learn from, support and build lasting relationships surround her and that they all share the common goal of making the society better.

Naming Drinko Library as her favorite place on campus, Porscha said her favorite season is summer because the Memorial Fountain is on and everyone is around the Memorial Student Center Plaza. Porscha has big dreams for Marshall, even after she graduates.

“I want Marshall to continue to grow and prosper. In ten years, I hope I am giving back to Marshall,” she said. “I want to give students an opportunity and resources to succeed. College is a stressful time and students are trying to have their lives together, although [they are] nowhere near put together, so I want to assist and be that helping hand.”