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Professor Holder

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Shawana Jones

While conducting an interview you learn a lot about the person. You think you know the person but in fact you find out how they really feel about everyday situations. The hardest part about this process is finding someone to be your topic while staying on topic. In result choose Shawana Jones, my aunt. Shawana Jones showed me that life is hard. To balance raising a family, staying financially stable, while still trying to have a personal life.

One reason why life can be hard for her is that she raised a family of three. Now raising a family is hard for anybody even if you have one child or six children. Raising a family is a big responsibility. Sometimes wishing she had more than just two but sometimes feeling she doesn't want none at all, but to know you have people that love you no matter what is the reward. In high school I was with her almost every day afterschool and I was like the adopted child while my cousins were away at college. I even had chores. Like I knew when she tried to sweet talk me when she would say "Taylor Nicholl'e" After asking me the favor she would then ask me why me and my siblings have the same middle name. In a way the name Nicholl'e was all the girls' middle name in our family. Now that Jones children are both over the age of twenty-one

it's a struggle having them both back home after graduating college. She's used to having just her husband and herself and now it seems that her and her daughters both bump head more times than once. She is ready for them to put their degrees to use and move out. With having kids you also have a husband or wife to take care of as well. Shawana Jones meet her husband of twenty five years at Morgan State University in 1980. She would see him linger all the time around campus cause he was an off campus student. Twenty five years is a long time and through that time you both grow and learn so much about life, love, and responsibility. But with a husband and kids you have you extended family like grandma, aunties, and uncles. Like getting together on holidays. In our family we try to get together once a month or the holiday for that month at a relative's house and share food, laughter, and stories. It's like a small family reunion every month. Through these dinners is the recipes we pass down like the Pineapple Upside down cake, banana pudding, and my grandmother's famous macaroni and cheese. But by having this once a month everyone is responsible for bringing something or someone. Like I'm usually in charge of drinks, and Ms. Lucas in responsible for the collard greens and sweet potato pie. In which everyone pulls there weight.

Another reason why life can be hard is the financial sustainability. It's even harder when you have kids. There are times it can be very stressful or even feel like it was a suicide mission just to get your bills paid on time, especially credit cards. It takes discipline you have to tell yourself "Work + play = fun." It becomes a much bigger responsibly once you have kids and there both in college at the same time. This is also very stressful. Jones says it's very hard to say no when you know they need help, but you

have to teach them to be on their own. But the real struggle for her was being laid off in the middle of both of her kids being away at school. She had to make some very hard decisions and really think about the needs and wants in life to see what is truly necessary. For instance my senior year of high school Aunt Shawna would pick me up from my night school class, and teach me how to drive after school. But because I have led foot she would say I'm going to drive up her insurance on her car and life. I made her too nervous. There was one time we stopped at a seven eleven and a lady walked up to me and asked me to stay close to her cause there was a man following her from the station. She then began asking me can I give her a ride to her car in the neighborhood across the street to get to her car safely. My Aunt Shawna began to ask her why she needed a ride and told her to get off of me. We ended up giving her a ride but before I could get in the car Jones pulled me aside and told me to be ready in case we have to bust her up. We dropped her off and finally went home. Finally at the end of the night my mom playfully blamed her for putting me in "danger."

Lastly you have to try and manage a personal life for yourself. Jones enjoys gardening, help her students, going to the gym, taking naps, having a clean house, while still being able to go out on the town with her girlfriends. Her inspiration for her being a teacher is her tenth grade English teacher. She wants to be an inspiration for her students for them to do better in life. Some quotes she lives by is that you reap what you sew. Meaning you doing something right or wrong your consequence will be based on what you've done. Also one monkey don't stop no show. Just because one person pulls of the plans at the last minute doesn't mean you have to do the same.

In conclusion this interview was one of the most exciting projects thus far. But you just have to know what you want to do and it will flow from there. Shawna Jones is one of the most amazing women I know, and I am blessed to have a woman like her in my life. Meanwhile conducting an interview you learn a lot about the person. You think you know the person but in fact you find out how they really feel about everyday situations. The hardest part about this process is finding someone to be your topic while staying on topic. In result choose Shawana Jones, my aunt. Shawana Jones showed me that life is hard. To balance raising a family, staying financially stable, while still trying to have a personal life.

## Interview Questions

1. What is it like raising a family?
2. How is it having two kids in college at the same time?
3. How do you maintain financial sustainability with kids?
4. How did you meet your husband meet?
5. What is your favorite thing to do?
6. How do you feel now both kids are home from college?
7. What are some common expressions or family sayings?
8. How holiday are celebrated in your family?
9. Does your family hold reunions?
10. Does the family have any special recipes?
11. If you had a chance would you have more children?
12. What is it like being married?
13. What do you know about your family name? What does it mean?
14. Are there any stories in your family about how a great fortune was lost or made?