

September 9th – The Impact of Black Language

Black language is the foundation to the social and cultural communication norms across the world. Black people are the ones who typically come up with the most popular sayings and phrases and I imagine it comes from not having the ability to learn the “proper” words to use in any given context. Black people first learned English from those who enslaved them but then had to come up with their own language/way to communicate to break free from them. Going to Howard University, an HBCU, AAVE is seen everywhere on campus. Going to a Black school with mainly Black professors means that AAVE is just a cultural norm and it influences how we learn. If you are speaking to a predominantly Black audience in comparison to a predominately white audience, you can cater to them differently to get the same point across. Personally, I feel more confident when I use AAVE because that is what I grew up with and what feels the most like me, but given my future profession and just the world we live in, it is not necessarily my main language. AAVE has influenced English-speaking audiences for generations and although that is good in the sense of normalization, it also results in a thin line of appropriation.

September 18th – The Importance of Community

It is very interesting to think of the importance of a community in my life because I am a very independent person, yet I still know that I have others in my corner both professionally and personally. I would not be at Howard or have many of the opportunities that I have if it weren't for my parent's community and networks. The people who have been watching me grow up on Facebook yet have never met me in person are some of my biggest supporters and the only way I can personally attest to that are my current accomplishments and a few comments on my mom's post. Community is something that is very important. The establishment of a community can and will look different from person to person but for success, it is crucial to keep others by your side. You never know who knows who can land you your next job or who will invite you to take a free vacation with them. Something that I would like to note is that community and network relations go both ways. A person cannot constantly go to someone else and expect them to give 100% when you're not reciprocating that same energy. Community is a precious gem and one must know how to nurture it.