

FOCUS



A NEWSLETTER FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS AT TSU



SEPTEMBER, 2021



TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY IS AN AA/EEO EMPLOYER

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FROM MY DESK



ROBERT BUGGS

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As we enjoy the opportunity to go outside and be on campus this semester, always remember to be S.A.F.E. Of course, you know to be mindful of your **S**urroundings, but also pay attention to your **A**ttitude, be aware of your **F**ears, and think of **E**mpathy as currency.

We all have been told to look both ways before we cross a street or to not talk to strangers, however, in today's society our Surroundings include so much more. Be sure to monitor your time on social media. Make sure you enjoy time outdoors. Be aware of your mental well-being.

Your Attitude plays a big part in how you show up in the world. Positivity is key! Be aware of the energy you put out into the universe. The energy you give is usually the energy you receive. Know your Fears. Know what makes you comfortable (seek more of these) and/or uncomfortable (avoid these). Allow yourself time to grow as growth takes time. Don't let obstacles and mistakes overwhelm you. The beginning of every journey starts with one step. You are here, you've got this!

Empathy is currency. Being nice goes a long way. Paying someone with a smile or a warm wish could be just the pick me up YOU may need one day. So, investing warm gestures into others is worth the return.

I hope these words find you in a SAFE place.

See you soon!

-Mr. Buggs

MEET ARIANA AND JANESSA OUR NEW FIRST-GENERATION SPECIALISTS

ARIANA NIEVES, M.ED.

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My name is Ariana Nieves and I am from Long Beach, CA. I graduated from California State University, Long Beach with a Bachelors degree in Human Development. I also earned a Masters of Education degree in School Counseling from the University of Southern California. I am delighted to be at TSU and cannot wait to meet my students. I believe that coaching is meeting students where they are, and empowering students through their strengths and passions.

I love to travel, bake, hike, read, and spend time with family and friends. As a first-generation student, one of my defining moments in higher education was graduating with my Masters of Education in school counseling from the University of Southern California. This moment was defining because I had spent many years applying to graduate schools without luck, now I can proudly say that I graduated for my family and me. My favorite food is mac and cheese. My favorite quote is " Don't let fear stop you. Don't give up because you are paralyzed by insecurity or overwhelmed by the odds, because in giving up, you give up hope. Understand that failure is a process in life, that only in trying can you enrich yourself and have the possibility of moving forward. The greatest obstacle in life is fear and giving up because of it." - Sonia Sotomayor



JANESSA GRAHAM, B .A.

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I am Janessa Graham. I am from Chicago, IL and I graduated from Kentucky State University with a Bachelors degree in Child Development & Family Relations. I'm currently pursuing my Master of Arts degree in Adult & Higher Education and am very happy to be in Nashville and working at TSU. I believe that coaching is about uplifting, encouraging, and motivating students to reach their fullest potential and live out their purpose in life.

I enjoy spending quality time with my family and friends. I also enjoy singing, attending concerts, shopping, and bowling. As an advocate of education, one of my top defining moments was being a third-generation graduate of Kentucky State University. I followed the footsteps of my grandmother, mother, and uncle who all graduated from KSU as well. Also, another defining moment was deciding to enroll in the Adult & Higher Education program at Morehead State University after realizing that I have a special passion for higher education. Nothing does my heart better than pouring into my students and watching them achieve all their goals and dreams. My favorite food is chicken! Because I believe that the best person you can be is yourself, one of my favorite quotes is, "Leave a trail of glitter wherever you go." - Unknown



Student Spotlight

ASIA GRAHAM

What is your major?

Social Work

Why did you choose this major?

I love helping others.

What are your plans for the future?

Upon graduation, I plan to pursue my master's degree.

What inspired you to choose TSU as your College of choice?

I loved that TSU was an HBCU and was close to home.

What was your favorite subject at TSU?

Black Literature

What activities did you participate in on campus?

I was involved in the Social Work Club. I served as the club's president prior to the pandemic.

What are your hobbies?

I love traveling and spending time with family, especially my daughters.

What are some mottos you live by?

Be respectful, and treat others the way you want to be treated.

What country would you like to visit one day and why?

The United Kingdom has always been somewhere I have wanted to visit. I would love to go there to study literature.

What is one thing you know now about college you wish someone had told you before you started?

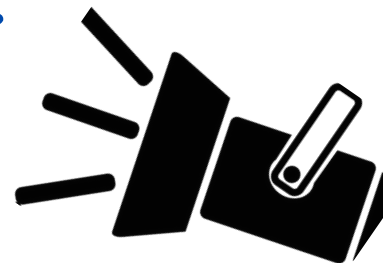
One thing I wish I would have known about college before I started is the multitude of opportunities it brings you.

What would you be your advice to another TSU's first-generation student?

Believe in yourself, and always keep trying!

Who is your greatest inspiration?

Tupac Shakur is my biggest inspiration.



Knowledge & Empowerment

Summer Professional Development

**The 2021 NASPA VIRTUAL
CONFERENCE STUDENT SUCCESS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION
(JUNE 26- JUNE 30)**

The team learned to identify strategies for supporting first-generation students and bridging gaps in cultural capital through asset-based programmatic approaches, services, and skill building.

**THE LIFE DESIGN CATALYST
PRACTITIONER TRAINING
(JUNE 7-JUNE 10)**

THIS CURRICULUM AND APPROACH UTILIZE INTROSPECTIVE TOOLS AND POWERFUL QUESTIONS THAT EMPOWER STUDENTS TO CREATE AMBITIOUS ACADEMIC, CAREER, AND LIFE PLANS LEADING TO SUCCESS IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE. THE PARTICIPATING STAFF HAVE RECEIVED THEIR CERTIFICATION AS LIFE DESIGN CATALYST FACILITATORS.

NACADA (JULY 20- JULY 23)

"NACADA is an association of professional advisors, counselors, faculty, administrators, and students working to enhance the educational development of students." NACADA is a conference that is held annually in hopes of educating professionals and teaching them new methods and skills that benefit their students tremendously.



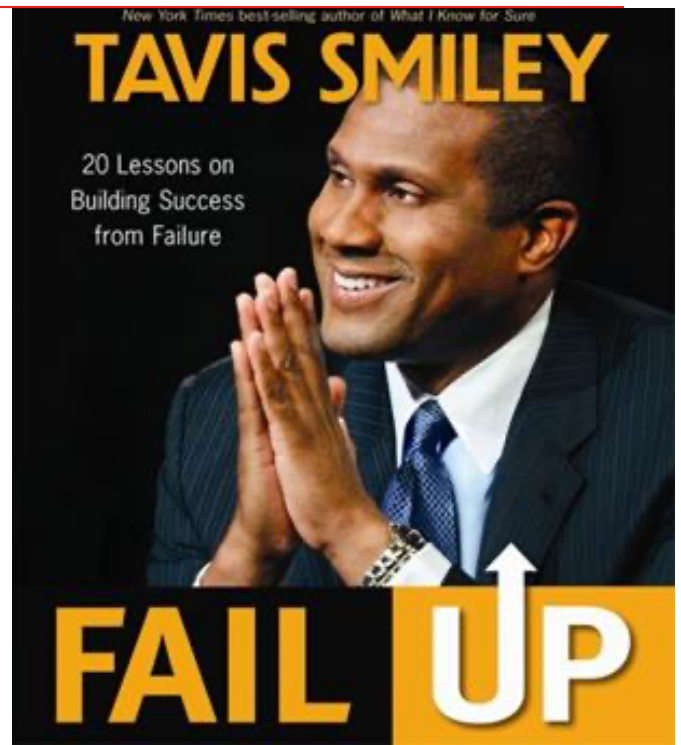
Can We Peak Your Interest?

GOOD READ

Fail Up!

In Tavis Smiley's book "Fail up", he highlights 20 Lessons on Building Success from Failure. Smiley recounts the many lessons that have transformed him into the person he is today. Tavis Smiley's rawness will allow you to connect to his humanity, and inspire others to "Fail Up".

Smiley, Tavis. Fail Up: 20 Lessons on Building Success from Failure. Hay House, 2013.



GOOD WATCH

Invincible

Release Date: August 25, 2006

Summary: *Invincible* is an inspiring true story that highlights the life of Vince Papale, who is a part-time local bartender, and avid Philadelphia Eagles fan. After experiencing a series of failures, such as divorce and being released as a substitute teacher, the Eagles hired a new coach. The head coach wanted to shake things up, so he hosted an open tryout for all locals. Vince Papale is inspired by his friends to give it a shot. A movie for all ages. One that showcases, no matter how old you may be, you can still follow your dream.

Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Vince Papale, Elizabeth Banks, Greg Kinnear, Kirk Acevedo, Michael Rispoli, Kevin Conway, Dov Davidoff, Michael Kelly, Nicoye Banks, Michael Nouri, Michael Mulheren and Paige Turco.

Gray, Gordon, et al. *Invincible*. Buena Vista Pictures, 2006.

