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Black College Fund Connects Hispanic and Latino Students to Higher Education *Student Profile: Tyona Hernandez, Rust College*



More than 502 miles and nearly 10 hours away from home, Kansas native Tyona Hernandez struggled to adjust to college life on the historic campus of Rust College because of limited financial support. “I didn’t have a job so money was limited,” she explained in a report to the Black College Fund. “It made me miss home.” The Black College Fund scholarship was her relief she thankfully explained, “The scholarship made it possible for me to attend the school.”

Attending Rust College was a dream since high school, a dream cultivated by former instructor and Rust alumnus, Julius Brown. His zeal and passion for the college made Tyona excited to learn more. “Mr. Brown would always speak about ‘his HBCU’ and was a very successful alumnus, so I thought I would be as successful if I attended Rust also.”

The sophomore gained a new appreciation for Rust after completing a comparative religion course, as the college was her first introduction to the United Methodist denomination. Tyona has found her niche on campus. She is active in some of the many organizations Rust College provides, gained new friends and took the opportunity to find herself. “I became a member of Talented Fifth and Ebone’ Fashion Club at the beginning of the school year. I enjoyed myself in those groups so much.”

There’s more than meets the eye with this social science major. She is a musician and model who loves helping people. Growing up in Kansas was a true learning experience Tyona expressed. “I had a chance to be around all kinds of people.” This experience fueled her desire to become a therapist. “Seeing how much my advice helped others is something I love. I love helping people.”

Once regretful of her decision to move miles away from home, Tyona now embraces the adventure of Rust College and is thankful that the Black College Fund is leading the way.