

Esther Banks is a Financial Aid Counselor and Scholarship Coordinator at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. A recent transplant from the Midwest to the South, she just moved Ohio earlier this year where she worked at Miami University and Central State University. Esther graduated from Ohio University in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering. After graduation she completed two years with AmeriCorps as an Ohio College Guides working to get K-12 students college ready. She has also completed Graduate level coursework in Educational Psychology and received a certificate of Assessment and Evaluation in Educational Psychology. Outside of work, Esther is a proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., a graduate of the NAACP Next Generation Leadership program, enjoys community service projects and showing her creative side by doing DIY projects for friends and family.

**What changes in diversity have you seen since beginning your career in higher education?**

Since beginning my career in higher education, I have seen both larger and smaller universities embrace diversity of all kinds. I have seen the offering of more diverse courses, campus events have become more inclusive of all types of people, even outside speakers show representation of underrepresented faculty, staff and students. I believe that by actively showing this type of inclusion, it has allowed for more diverse faculty and staff to feel comfortable applying and working in higher education and in turn this representation has made students feel represented and seen.

**What is one interesting fact/ hidden talent about you?**

I absolutely love pickles. My favorite weird pickle combination is pickles & macaroni and cheese! It's amazing!

**When you are not working, you can be found doing ...?**

I can usually be found either catching up on sleep or coming up with fun ideas to create my next DIY project to gift my family and friends.