

Feminist Camp

|
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Meet Chardée Bryant! She is a senior interested in the career field of mental health counseling and policy.

Describe yourself and why you wanted to attend the Feminist Camp:

I am in my fourth year of studies at Tulane University, pursuing a dual degree in psychology and sociology and a minor in business management. I am interested in becoming a licensed clinical psychologist, focusing specifically on infant and

childhood mental health. I aspire to provide clinical and community based assessment and treatment for young children and their families. I am also passionate about public policy, thus I am destined to plan initiatives that focus on improving academic and career success for racial minorities by using a social and cultural context to better understand the needs of this population. I attended the Feminist Camp in hopes of analyzing feminism through the lens of intersectionality as intersectionality is a fundamental element of the work that I do and the work that I will do in the near future. Furthermore, the every-day issues that marginalized women face can ultimately contribute to mental health issues — which is my career focus.

Describe your favorite parts of the conference:

During the conference, we focused on themes such as philanthropy, reproductive justice, professional development, media as a tool to address social issues, and women within the criminal justice system. This flexibility allowed conference attendees the opportunity to soak in an abundance of information while also having the platform to share the many things that we do on campus and within our communities. I enjoyed being able to learn new ways to address issues relating to social justice and suggesting some of the approaches that I have learned through my involvement with Tulane’s Community Engagement Advocacy Program. Visiting The Muse was especially rewarding as I met with a professional career coach who was able to help me strength my resume and better my approach to looking for jobs as well as applying for jobs. Another highlight of my experience was visiting the Reproductive Health Access Project, which organizes more than 700 primary care clinicians in 38 states. Here, I met with the original founders of the organizations in addition to two doctors who specialize in abortions. Also, myself and other conference attendees “performed abortions on papayas” to mirror the reality that abortion is not as risky as many assume. Yes, it can be a traumatizing experience and it can come with many conflicting emotions. However, abortions do not cause breast cancer or contribute to infertility — which are a few misconceptions.

Highlight information you learned on reproductive health and reproductive justice:

Above all else, I especially enjoyed the many conversations regarding reproductive justice. I had the opportunity to network with professionals at organizations such as Spence-Chapin, the Ms. Foundation for Women, the National Advocated for Pregnant

Women, the Choices Medical Center, and the Reproductive Health Access Project. During these conversations, we analyzed how issues relating to race, class, and sex all work together to negatively impact a women's ability to reproduce and efficiently support a family. Considering the work that I am interested in doing within my chosen field, these conversations are essential to better understand the onset of mental health complications and the development of psychopathology.

Detail what you learned that you hope to never forget:

During a conversation with a panel at The Muse, it was suggested that we should not focus on what we want to be — instead, we should focus on who we want to be. Having a title is one thing, but it means so much more to actually do the very things that we set out to do.

Why should other students attend a Feminist Camp:

It is inspiring to be surrounded by so many like-minded people, it is a reminder that the work that I do is needed and valued. Also, attending this conference during my senior year allowed me exposure to an array of job possibilities and was a great networking opportunity.

Does this sound like something you might be interested in? Tulane undergraduate students can apply to NCI for funding to attend Feminist Camp. Email Betsy Lopez at elopez@tulane.edu for more information.

Responses have been lightly edited for length and clarity.