

# BSC \_ Season 1 \_ Episode 2 \_ Final

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## SPEAKERS

Dr. Brandi P. Jones, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Fowles

- D** Dr. Thomas 00:01  
Black Social Capital, Black Social Capital. Today's guest is Dr. Brandi P. Jones. She is a national thought leader in STEM diversity, and she is the Vice Dean for Diversity and Strategic Initiatives and a Professor of Engineering Education at the University of Southern California's School of Engineering. She's been a higher education administrator at large public, community college, liberal arts and Ivy League institutions. And in addition to all of this, she also helps communities who have limited access and resources through her work with college outreach programs, such as Young Engineering and Science Scholars Program, Upward Bound, the College Aspiration Partnership Program, Chick Tech, and Indeed We Code. So with that, I want to welcome you, Brandi.
- D** Dr. Brandi P. Jones 01:09  
Thank you. It's great to be here.
- D** Dr. Thomas 01:12  
And I'm super excited to have you on today. Just because we know each other because we used to be on the same campus together. And, you know, it was my job, you know, professionally but also personally to know, all the Black people I could on campus. All the people that were movers and shakers, and I was really excited to have someone of your caliber step into the engineering role as a dean within within the School of Engineering at

USC. And I think in my heart of hearts, one of the reasons that we even have this this podcast is because I was trying to mimic some of the things that I saw you do. Some reason it was two o'clock or three o'clock during the day and you were having tea and meetings with with, with other Black movers and shakers on campus. And I'm like, well, what are they talking about over there? It looks like they're leveling up again. And I'm not sitting there. It's I wanted to try to create that, that kind of community and culture for the folks that that I have influence of over and influence to, in my sphere. So, really excited to just get a little bit of nuggets myself today. I've got my notebook ready. And I'll be taking some notes along the way. So I'll pass it back over to Jaqui.



02:36

All right.



Dr. Thomas 02:38

So let's get today started with our intellectual capital segment. This is a discussion of a Black scholar's research, academic journey or current events in the professional world. Today we are going to hear about Dr. Jones's research. So first question, what is the topic of your research and how did you become interested in it?



Dr. Brandi P. Jones 03:00

So I actually started conducting research on Black students in STEM. Back in the late 90s. I was a masters student at California State University Long Beach, and, and then eventually went to work at California Institute of Technology, where I came across Black students who were doing well academically, despite being incredibly underrepresented on campus. So this was quite different than the narrative presented in the literature about Black students in STEM. So as I moved along in my career, I continued meeting Black students who were excelling. Everything presented in the literature, spoke to Black students having difficulty persisting in STEM. So I became quite interested in exploring Black students experiences through an anti deficit frame. My thought was that there are very well known factors why students don't persist, but I was interested in understanding how students persist despite unwelcoming racialized environments. So my work is entitled the collective of my work is called Black in STEM. So my research is on experiences of Black engineering students, particularly at the PhD level in STEM field. Wow.



Dr. Thomas 04:24

I have a question around your research processes. So I know you started off at the at the Masters level doing some initial research, then you moved forward. Tell us about that process and how maybe some of your methods might have shifted, or how they became more simplified or maybe even more complicated as you began to do more research.

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 04:48

So initially, I started research and didn't really know I was doing research. I was studying under Dr. Dawn Person at the time at Cal State Long Beach and she used to take us along on what I now know were actual research studies at various institutions where she used to run focus groups. So back before we had Google meetup and zoom and other platforms that we could do this online, she would actually load us up. And we would travel to various campuses, and do interviews with students. And again, I don't know that I understood that I was conducting formal research, but that's actually what I was doing. And then, at the point that it was time to write up results, I was actually helping her. Our research group is helping her and her study. And as I got further along, I realized that's where my research career actually started. In terms of methods, my work is grounded in portraiture research, and I would say that I was actually conducting portraiture research, some 20 years ago, but didn't have a name for it. So through the lens of the portraiture method, we're able to add contextual human qualities and greater nuance to what is already known about minority students. So the use of portraiture methodology allows us to introduce texture into the generally accepted findings regarding students of color in STEM disciplines. And it creates the opportunity for new understanding of how Black students navigate engineering program at predominantly white universities, especially encounters with faculty, peers and institutional structures. And this method is important because it captures the voices and perspective of students. It highlights the strengths rather than the deficiencies in a narrative, right? So oftentimes, research is done particularly on Black students, to really look at all the things that are wrong and why they're wrong. And portraiture research highlight the strengths of this student it also requires an understanding of the context, which often is the physical space or campus. So, I've always understood all of those things. And those have always entered into my research. But I didn't have a name for it until I actually got graduate well in a doctorate program. We're actually learn what the process was called and so that's portraiture. And everything that I do, really engages the students the voices through portraiture.

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Dr. Thomas 07:34

I think that's, I think that's really telling and I think it leads into the next question I have for you in terms of now that you've conducted all this research. I've seen you be really hands on with students. Students know you directly. They're not afraid to come and visit you.

And I think a lot of times you know, we get stuck in a period but not so much in how to apply it in the practice. And I think that you've done a really great job in doing that. So what are what are some of the things that you want people to do? Or to think about or to engage with, as a result of your research findings?

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 08:19

I everything that you said is, is true because I am a scholar practitioner. You know, there are some scholars that just study it. I was a practitioner, before I was a scholar, formally, right and so everything that I read and write about, I also put into practice. So it's my hope that through my research, faculty and administrators will better understand that number one, the Black Student Experience is not monolithic. There are a number of ways in which Black people Black students in particular experience the Diversity. And two, there are Black students progressing despite not absent racial encounters and racial experiences. So I use students' experiences, particularly at these highly selective top tier institutions. People tend to think that just because a student graduates or just because a student is doing well academically, or just because a student is winning awards, and other honors, that they haven't had horrific experiences. And so my research sheds light on the fact that we will overcome, we get our degrees. We do all the things that they say a scholar is supposed to do in the academy, but we're having these racialized experiences. And when I start sharing those experiences, people are stunned. And so tying this back to portraiture, the importance of portraiture is through portraiture, you can hear the students' voice. And of course, without using students' names, I use the experiences and I make them real for other faculty, for administrators so that they can understand what's really happening to Black students, and what the experiences are even when they see the students smiling, right, because we know what to do, right? So faculty, staff, students, we smile, we go about our business, we do what we got to do. But on the other side of that, we're holding up a tremendous burden of racialized experiences. So it's my hope that my research will help shed light on some of those experiences. And then for the students, my hope is that they understand it's not just you particularly in the STEM field. Students are often in small research groups where they are the only and they may think that they're the only ones going through. So I also use my research to tell students if not just you and you ain't crazy. This is real.

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Dr. Thomas 11:19

Dr. Jones, you said you have a collective of work that you call Black in STEM, where can our listeners find that?

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 11:28

It's, it's Black in the Lab. You can't find it just yet. Because my hope is it's going to be either published soon or you may be able to see it on screen. That's all that's that's all I can say about that. Okay,

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Dr. Thomas 11:46

with you telling us a little sneak peek. Sneak Peek. Oh, you'll be right to the premiere. Okay. I'll be in my finest of robes, my hair be flowing with the juices and berries,

D

Dr. Brandi P. Jones 12:02

but I will say the the, the collection of stories is really Black PhD engineering students at top 20 institutions across the country. So it gets a really good look at and students who are doing well, right so doing well academically, but when they start sharing their stories and so what you get is the different ways in which they they're experiencing these programs, and where they've learned some of their their strategies, right. Some have been doing this since they were five years old, and didn't realize it until ask the question, and then when they started telling the story I say, "Wait a minute now, you've been navigating white folks in the white world since you were a little child," but they hadn't thought about that or I will give you one sneak peek, there's a particular experience a particular segment that I call learning Chinese. And in the segment, this PhD student tells a story of being not just the only Black in his program, but the only American in his program. So he's telling me I said "Tell me what you do day to day, you know, just kind of outline your day in the lab." And he says, Oh, I have to get there really early to clean the equipment and the machine. I said, Excuse me, I said, so is this something every PhD student does this? He goes, Oh, no, no, no, no, I have to do it. So that they'll play nice with me so that they'll engage with me. You know, there are times that the you know, what goes on behind the scenes and what's discussed regarding the research because discussed in Chinese. And so I'm outside of that network. So I go in and clean equipment and clean the lab so that they'll play nice with me. And he just felt that well, he had been doing it so long. He just thought that was and I said, Wait stop. So say that again. And I made it I made him keep saying it. And I said, You do know, that's not normal. And you do no, that's not right? And he hadn't thought about it, because that's survival. And he had been doing this since he was a masters student. So we're talking about you've been doing this for, you know, seven years. Without that's just what you do in the academy as a Black man. So I, you know, it's a powerful way. It's a powerful tool that I think will be used, that will be powerful for administrators for faculty, but also for other students to recognize that you don't have to do this



15:01

Wow,



Dr. Thomas 15:02

that is Yeah, but I mean, it's a true story we do a lot of different things that that, you know, friends, family know mentors that they often say, you know, you have to do things two and three times better to get ahead right and so sometimes we take on these these obstacles and nobody else is is tackling



Dr. Brandi P. Jones 15:25

you know, I feel I was telling somebody I worked for I have I have to come in and go to everybody's office Good morning, I got to disarm the white folk, you know, I have to bring the coffee, bring the bagels, bring the donuts, you know, beyond happy time to disarm them to all this additional stuff I have to do before I can even do my job. Right?



Dr. Thomas 15:50


It's true. I think that that's part of the I mean, even into getting into this next section, which I'll describe in a second, but my Building your community capital on that journey that you have, like how do you how do you make those ends? How do you create the network? It's it's sometimes just playing the game. So that in the moment that you need them to hear you, they'll actually listen Alright, we're gonna take a quick break and we'll be back right after this. Zora Neale Hurston said those that don't got it can't show it. Those that got it can't hide it. Show that you got it with the merge we have in the Black Social Capital store. We've got statement teas, totes, and even a journal. I like to rock my scholar practitioner tee with a blazer. visit our store at [staymotivatedandrisetogether.com/shop](https://staymotivatedandrisetogether.com/shop). So welcome back from the break. Our Community Capital segment is a discussion of a Black professionals journey, best practices or professional lessons learned and today we're gonna talk about your professional journey. And so the first question I have you alluded to this a little bit earlier, but talk about your educational pathway and how you chose your institutions. You know, your major, your degree plans. Tell us a little bit more about your journey.





Dr. Brandi P. Jones 17:15


I guess I will start with kind of my academic path. And then I'll say a little bit about where I've worked. So, I started as an undergraduate student, started and finished, I should say, I


graduated from San Jose State University. I studied Japanese language and speech communication. And I wanted to be a world famous speech writer. Whoa

 Dr. Fowles 17:46  
What you was doing studying Japanese.


 Dr. Brandi P. Jones 17:50  
You know, I started speaking Japanese. I started studying at age 11 or 12 and studied through college.

 18:00  
Okay,

 Dr. Fowles 18:01  
I got my questions,

 18:02  
right. Why are you studying

 Dr. Fowles 18:04  
Japanese

 Dr. Brandi P. Jones 18:06  
is 11. So, my father made me study Japanese. And now I'm first generation college. But my father's rationale was you know, you come home you have your foreign most of us take Spanish, right? My father was like, what money are you making with that? So his rationale, remember, he didn't go to college, but his rationale was, well, the Japanese are making the televisions and they're making the cars. You need to know that language to survive. That's all he knew. That was his rationale. So he said, I feel like you know, the car industry, electronics. Those are big industries. I don't know what you're going to be and do in life. But I know one thing you need to know Japanese. So that that was his thought process. So I had no choice. So I had to go to a school outside of the school I was supposed to go to,

in order to study Japanese. And then I chose San Jose State, interestingly enough, because at the time it was one of the only institutions where you could they had an exam you had to take, they were just developing it. So you didn't have to start at j one or Japanese one. You could take a test, a placement tests and so other institutions didn't have that for Japanese. So that's, that's how that happened. So went there also studied speech communication. I wanted to be a speech writer. I did my first oratorical contest at age 12. So I was very interested in in public speaking, but I remember asking my parents who writes the speeches, right? Because I would be very I would see, you know, the President of the United States or whoever giving a speech on TV, you know, might have been the the superintendent. So I would say, who writes these speeches? And, you know, my mother would say they have professional speech writers. I said, that's what I want to be. That's what I want to do. And so anyway, I went, I went off to California State University Long Beach to study under one of the most distinguished scholars in speech communication. His name was Ken Plaques. I thought one day I'd be writing speeches for presidents of the United States and people like that. Once I got to Long Beach, my spirit of activism led me to get involved with student government and leadership. And the issue at the time was remedial education at the CSU level, and what that meant, and so I understood quickly this is going to affect Black students. So what did I do? I ran off senator of education. And I got really engaged. One of my mentors suggested that I would be good working in higher education. So as a promise to her, I took a course in student development in higher education. I began to learn about student development, identity development theories. And the rest is history. I said, Actually, that's how they get us. So I left the Communication Studies program, I applied for a master's in counseling, with an emphasis in student development in higher education. And that was, that's how they got me. So since then, I've worked in a number of areas and institutions, before going back to school to earn my doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania and higher education management of my little over 20 years in higher education, I've spent 10 in student affairs related units, and another 10 in engineering schools. But the better part of my 20 year career even in Student Affairs has been working in STEM diversity. So I've worked at Cal State Long Beach, Cal State Dominguez, Long Beach City College, California Institute of Technology, Occidental College, Princeton University, right before USC. So that's, that's, that's my path. And I mentioned that my doctorate's in higher education management. And I pursued that because it was important for me to understand all aspects of the university. So I wanted to understand and engage on two sides of the university, academic side Student Affairs side and understand how both of those work together in kind of larger university decisions making.

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Dr. Thomas 23:03

that's a that's a perfect segue into the next question, which is just to describe your, your



current kind of role and responsibilities. And I'm also curious because you've done so much like what's what has been your favorite type of role and where you feel you've made the most impact.

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 23:25

So, in my current role as Vice Dean for Diversity and Strategic Initiatives, in the Viterbi School of Engineering at USC, my role is really to advance diversity, equity and inclusion for faculty, staff and students. And some I really serve as in a coaching capacity to a number of our units, all of our academic departments, they're eight. In addition to that, I work there closely with marketing and communication, advancement, human resources, essentially every part of the school to make certain that they have equity. And certainly now racial equity because we you know, we can say it now. We have racial equity plans in place in each of those units. And I'm also charged with making certain that there are metrics to evaluate the work that we do. I also oversee a center, focus on the retention and graduation of African American, Latino, Native American and Pacific Islander students. So you all could

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Dr. Thomas 24:48

go on to jump in, or guess your favorite tools. You said? We can talk about race now. Can you just take a moment and like share like what the industry feel my may have been like around this race, right? Because I know that there's, you know, National Society of Black Engineers, there's, you know, there's a women, Society of Women Engineers, all the all these affinity groups, human resource groups and organizations, but like has been the, I guess, the norm around race and identities, just in the engineering space. From your perspective, I mean, that could be academically or just in the field itself.

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 25:35

So it's never been a space where one can safely talk about race. Now, I will say we addressed race from what I consider to be a deficit model. So we consider support programs for people who are of underrepresented minority backgrounds as they say, I think what has now happened with the murder of George Floyd and all that's going on in society, it's opening up a conversation, to not just talk about racial identity, but to talk about racism, and to talk about racial equity as a standalone. What's happened in most of our institutions and industries is that diversity, equity and inclusion- while in some ways, yes, it's advanced our work, but in a lot of ways, it's set us back to be honest, because most Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives does not account for systemic racism. So now, I believe the platform and the conversation is open for us to have some serious

conversations about race that we've never been able to have before.

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Dr. Thomas 27:06

You know, I had to get your nuggets on that, I wasn't gonna let that pass by, you know, your favorite role and all that, you know, something light,

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 27:17

that would go something light. So, you know, I, I really appreciate small environments. Which is why I think I probably my favorite experience probably was California Institute of Technology and people when I say that people say what are you talking about? And I say that for a number of reasons. One, it was small enough to really have an impact, meaning it was small enough where you didn't have all these layers and bureaucratic systems that exists like a large university. And so you could tell directly to the President. You could get all of the Institute leaders around a table and have conversations. I think the other thing that I really valued about that experience is they're engineers and scientists. Researchers, right, not educator researchers who understood their limitation. So they recognize this ain't our lane this and our expertise. This is your expertise. So you tell us we acknowledge we don't we don't know this. We know physics. You know, this other stuff. And so I was interested in a particular way to do the work that I needed to do to to build my center. It was also well resourced so but I didn't have there weren't a whole lot of layers and conversation. what needed to be had for the students what needed. I was able to provide, you know, at a larger institution, there's a lot more involved. So that's the reason why I think even at USC, I work within a school versus central, right, because at this point in my career, I refused to take a position where I can't have impact. So there have been a number of positions that have crossed my desk that I have not engaged for the simple fact that this is really about impact at whatever level, right? And so I'm not, I'm not in the the day to day work with students as I was before I interact with students. But I oversee policies, and I oversee the people who work with the students, but it's important that I'm able to still have great impact And when I can't have that impact anymore, I'm gone.

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Dr. Fowles 30:06

Well, let me come with you I just want to be on the coattails.

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 30:10

You're on my team. So wherever I go next, you all are my team. I might go where you go, though? I'll pass. Right?

D Dr. Fowles 30:21  
Why now at home? by me,

D Dr. Thomas 30:24  
we're all at home.

D Dr. Brandi P. Jones 30:27  
Indeed.

D Dr. Thomas 30:29  
You know, I really like what you said about being in a place where you can have that impact and your professionalism is respected, right? Well, your expertise is respected. Because I feel like as a student affairs professional, that it is very easy for others in other areas of the institution that are not student affairs professionals, to kind of crossover into our lane, a lot, right and make a lot of decisions where, you know, maybe we should be consulted. And yeah, that is nice. I'm glad you have that.

D Dr. Brandi P. Jones 31:10  
Most, most decisions that are made on campuses don't engage the people who work with students. Now, so true, I'm not gonna name no names, no institutions, but there are institutions where there are a number of conversations as I interact with leadership at a number of different institutions. Oftentimes, I'm called to consult or have a word with a president or provost. And it's interesting to me because number of committees are set up at every institution, about what the next step should be as a relates to the fall and instruction and the the student experience and all these things. I can tell you at nearly every university that I've interacted with around this issue- The people on the committees are not the people who work with students. Yep, I find that fascinating. I find it. I'm not surprised, though, which, which to my earlier point, that's one of the reasons why I wanted to work on both sides, right? Because when I was at Occidental, this is right before I went to Princeton, so Occidental was my last kind of Student Affairs job and I was a Associate Dean there and had a number of units that reported under me. But the issue there was always a rub with academic affairs or the academic side of the house. And so I knew that if I wanted to move up in the academy, I needed to have experience on both sides and I also wanted to understand the viewpoint of the other side. And now the beauty is for now I've been an academic unit and the Student Affairs side. So now I'm a faculty member in

the engineering school, but I have a student affairs lens, I have a student development when

**D** Dr. Thomas 33:11  
they are winning, they are winning,

**D** Dr. Brandi P. Jones 33:13  
and they don't even know they're winning. They don't, they don't know that they don't, they don't look at me as a student affairs professional, I'm STEM diversity. So when we're dealing with an issue, and it could be an issue that has nothing to do with diversity, right at the leadership level we're talking to it could be something like we're trying to figure out an honor code and honor system around academic integrity and things. And so when I'm able to add the layer of student development, and where students may be based on their year in school and experiences, nobody at the table is able to do that. But that's only because I've had the Student Affairs training to be able to understand that and so I just think it whatever my ultimate, you know, my ultimate career stop is or my next, my next trip, next place on my journey. I think I bring all of that, which makes me a more well rounded professional.

**D** Dr. Thomas 34:20  
So I think that leads really well into this next question because you just talked about how you speak with presidents and provosts, right? So I'm thinking about, you know, our listeners who are, you know, still trying to find their career path trying to find their big break. And I'm wondering if there is a person that you can talk about that you might want to shout out, right, that helped you become you know, Dr. Jones, right. Like, who is that person? What did what type of help did they provide to help you help you get to where you are

**D** Dr. Brandi P. Jones 35:00  
I will say that, you know, I've had a number of mentors and champions throughout my career but the one that I will shout out because it kind of sums up all of who I am now would be Dr. Shaun Harper. So, Dr. Shaun Harper was my doctoral advisor at the University of Pennsylvania. Now we're both now at USC. He is the the founding executive director of the Race and Equity Center at USC and a professor, both in the Education School and the business school. But Dr. Harper was my professor and he spoke life into my identity as a scholar. And he helped me to see my power as a scholar practitioner. And I'll

just share a quick story of how he spoke life into me and didn't even know me and and this is how I approach people who I meet, right, so scholars who I don't even know, because of this experience. And so I had the great fortune to meet Dr. Harper, at a conference. And of course, I knew of him and his work for many, many years. And so I met him at this conference. And he said, Oh, yes. He said, I haven't met you, but I'm familiar with your work. I know who you are, he said, is wonderful to meet you in person, Dr. Jones. And I said, I'm not a doctor. And he said, What? And he stopped right there dead in the middle of that conference now he clowned for a few minutes. Because he said, Why aren't you a doctor? And I'm like, ah, I don't know, you know, and he said, Wait, let me get this straight. You've done this, this this this. You've been at all these places. You've done all that and you're not he said, girl that doesn't make any sense.

**D** Dr. Thomas 36:58  
ouch

**D** Dr. Brandi P. Jones 36:59  
and so I was you know, I was stunned. But he also lifted a hand. He said, I said, I want you as soon as you get back to your hotel, I want you to look up this program and I want you to apply. That's all it took. And I did, I did just that now. My guess is he has his conversations with a number of Black scholars that he meets. Right? And so I, of course, never expected that I would actually get to work with him. And another quick story to sum that up, I ran into him and so I never had any more communication with him after that. But I looked it up. I applied to the program. So now we're probably maybe a year later. And I happened to be in the University of Pennsylvania bookstore. My parents were visiting me New Jersey and I wanted to get them you know, Penn mom, Penn Dad, you know wanted to give them their stuff. I think Dr. Theo knows this, but both of my parents are ill now but at the time my dad was was ill and I was pretty certain that that probably would be his last trip to the east coast. And I wasn't certain if he would live to see me graduate. But I said you live to see me start so I'm gonna get to your pins and stuff now. And so and I don't even know if they knew what Ivy League institution. I don't think they knew all that. So, so in walks, Dr. Shaun Harper, and I am Oh my god, you know, Dr. Harper, you know, we just I said, I applied to the program and I got in. And he said to me, he said, I don't remember your name, but I do remember. You work here. You You work there. I remember. He said, That's awesome. That's great. Now he didn't know anything about my parents' situations remember, he doesn't really know me. He loves dead at my father. And he says, Sir, your daughter is going to be a doctor. Now, that was that. And then of course, eventually he became my advisor. But I shared those two stories because one he spoke life into my potential as a scholar, when I didn't even know I could be a

scholar. I knew I was a practitioner, but I didn't know and he charged me to do something. And then without even knowing me, he turned to my parents. He understands what this means for us as a community and our parents. And didn't know anything about the situation but just looked at my dad says your daughters going to be a doctor. Until this day, my dad remembers that interaction. So he's still living and so yes, he don't know. doctorate advisor. You don't know what none of that means. But every now and then he said, What that young man that we met in the bookstore- Well how is he? Where is he? Well I said Daddy he's here now he's at USC. But I say that just to say, that is what we have to do. And and certainly someone at that caliber did not have to stop and talk to me, let alone talk to my parents. He didn't have to speak life into me at all, but did. So I always acknowledge and shout him out and I say he was my advisor, but really, I want to say he is my advisor. And I've I've coined myself as being a #HarperScholar. Because I learned so much and I continue to learn and the the biggest lesson there is having the ability to stand in your truth and speak what you believe. And having the scholarship to back that up. So it's not like he's just somewhere talking. But he can talk about Black folks because he's researched Black folks. So for me, that was the lesson that is that is the power in which it's not like I don't just stand up here and say these things because I'm Black in the academy. No, I say these things because I researched Blacks in the academy. So that's what I'll continue to do. So my hope is to walk in his path.

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Dr. Thomas 41:22

Now, you said something at the beginning of your answer to that last question. You said you've had many mentors and champions, can you tell our listeners may what the differences between the two

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Dr. Brandi P. Jones 41:34

So a mentor is someone who is going to kind of guide you and direct you and and give you advice. A champion is someone who's going to speak for you and lift you when you're not even there. Right? So, so, in my view, I've certainly had people who were there to to gas me up essentially, right? You're good, you got it, you you know, you know, to give me all the coaching and the tips and all of that. But I've also had those champions when I'm not in the room to say, you know, I think I think Dr. Jones would be great at this. And and I say that because, you know, we were just talking about Dr. Harper, but he's, he does both. So he mentors me on the back end. But in rooms, where I'm not in, you know, I get calls all the time, Dr. Shaun Harper said you'd be a good person to talk to about this. I'm like, you know, so, to me, but both are necessary because oftentimes those who, who we trust and we go to in our mentor, they're not necessarily in position to champion for us. And it's one of the things that as I've been talking to faculty, deans, administrators about what they

can do because now everybody wants to know what can we do? And so everyone says, like and mentor and I so that's important. Continue mentoring. But you also need to be a champion for your Black faculty, staff, and students. So don't just go and tell them what to do. But my expectation is when you are in staff meeting, faculty meeting, wherever you are, to speak about their experience their expertise to speak at them, not just oh, they're very nice. No speak about them in relationship to their very their expertise and their scholarship. ]

D

Dr. Thomas 43:28

Yes, yes. I love that. And I think that's really what sometimes that's really all we need.

D

Dr. Brandi P. Jones 43:40

You almost need that more than mentoring, to be honest. Right. Right mentor and mentor, ain't going to move you up, mentoring will affirm you, but it's championing championing and also, you know, this is where especially now- a lot of people are saying, oh, you're doing great work, I believe in you. I said, you say that to the dean and the president and the provost. I'm glad you're saying that to me, I appreciate you saying that to me. But when you have opportunities to, to mention that when you're in rooms, and I'm not in when you are in rooms, with in places where by position, you may not have power, but certainly by the color of your skin, you might have power and voice. Use it. Champion me.

D

Dr. Thomas 44:36

Part of Black Social Capital and building your network is becoming members of organizations that are doing amazing things. And I know that Dr. Jones, on top of the work that she does on campuses on top of running businesses for herself, is also a part of various organizations that are also impacting the community. I wanted to give her the opportunity to just kind of share that some of those organizations, how some of those organizations fit into the work that she does and and how they've influenced her career as well.

D

Dr. Brandi P. Jones 45:11

Absolutely. I am a proud member, a 25 year member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. And and there has been no other organization or experience that has impacted my personal and professional life more than Delta Sigma Theta. And I think what I will share about that is, you know, beyond the wonderful experience that we have, for those of us who joined at the collegiate level, I think that beyond that I have not, I don't

think I've ever worked for an organization where there wasn't a Delta somewhere in leadership, but if not a Delta someone from a Black Greek Letter Organization that understands what that means. And, and I can tell you that in every area of my life when I've needed a mentor or a champion, the first place that I look is in my sorority. So that has been just a great joy for me. I'm also a member of the Links Incorporated, which does a great deal for the community. And I am so fortunate, again, to be a part of another organization that has great power and influence in the Black community and beyond. And so, one of the things that is important to me is to be involved with organizations that will allow me to extend my reach, so I can only do so much but, you know, I'm on a number of panels and initiatives to advance stem in the black community through my work in Delta, and the Links.

D

Dr. Thomas 47:01

So Dr. Jones, thank you so much for your time. We are so excited about what we learned. And we're excited for what our listeners are going to get from today's episode. And with that, we are out Black Social Capital

D

Dr. Fowles 47:24

We hope you enjoyed today's show. Remember, the way we build social capital is to build self and build others. Your show you got some notes on your tablet, computer or even using a pen and paper. Leave us review. Continue the conversation on social media @BlackSocialCap, and share the show with someone you know. Until the next episode, stay motivated and rise together.

D

Dr. Thomas 47:48

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