



Jewel Bourne Biography

Why I do what I do? Access to quality, supportive education, institutional environments is a game changer that enables or disrupts opportunities for quality of life, particularly for minoritized communities. These supportive environments gave me the tools, knowledge and power to change my life. I feel honored to have the ability to continue this work and create policies that effect change, that has direct impact on student success.

Alma Mater?

Santa Monica College, (A.A Degrees in Liberal Arts/Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences)
University of California Los Angeles, (B.A Degrees in English and Gender Studies, with a concentration in Education)
California State University, Northridge (M.A Degree in Higher Education Administration)

Your role in one sentence: As a policy intern, I support the Policy and Advocacy team to expand our national footprint in service to students.

When I am not at work helping students get to succeed in college, I am... Spending time with my family, which includes my very active Labrador/Golden Retriever, Honey Belle, exploring new coffee shops and experimenting with new recipes and traveling.

If not higher education, then what cause? If I was not in higher education, I would be a chef and working to create spaces and opportunities to form and build community and welcoming environments.

Formal Bio

Jewel was raised in Los Angeles, CA and is the only daughter and youngest child of Guyanese immigrants whose move was motivated by the pursuit of greater opportunity for their growing family. The importance of education was instilled in her from a young age and her interests in policy and advocacy began in childhood with letter writing campaigns to government agencies on issues that presented inequitable opportunities for those in her community and sparked her interests in law as a potential career.

As a graduate of an alternative high school, the possibilities afforded by the California Community College system became a reality and a pathway to higher education and degree attainment. Jewel credits her experiences at community college, often being the only woman of color in her courses to prompt questions of “why she was the only one” and “how do we work to implement change”. An alumna of Santa Monica College, UCLA and California State University, Northridge, Jewel credits the collaborative transitional support programs at these institutions for her encouraging her to pursue these questions as well as introducing her to the possibilities of a career in higher education advocacy, championing student success and removing the stigma associated with community college and its students.

Her professional experiences including serving as an academic advisor and program coordinator at 4-year institutions and community colleges as well as serving as a research assistant. Currently Jewel is a Ph.D. Student in Educational Policy, Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.