

WARNING: THIS Conversation May NOT Be Completely "Politically Correct" But Enjoy, Nonetheless, My Brothers.....

Conversation #2 The District Conference Validating My Parking Expenses Experience



While attempting to validate my parking lot expense and secure a free space at the 2018 District Conference Meeting in downtown Baltimore, a young Black Woman takes my ticket and asks "What is going here"? When I respond "What do you mean?", she replies "All these Black Men down here"! She then smiled when I asked her "if she was loving all of the eye candy". I explained to her that we are the Brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. to which she smiled again. She THEN asked, "Fraternity, like those guys in the movie **"Burning Sands"**"? I said "Similar, but most of us have graduated from College and have families now" and I smiled. She said "Can I ask you a question", to which I responded "Not a problem". She then asked "Is it true what they are talking about and showing in the **"Burning Sands"** movie"?

Now I said to myself, "How do I go about answering THAT question"? I quickly decided to tell her the truth. I responded "I cannot speak for the experiences of the people who wrote the movie. Have there been recorded instances of hazing by individuals "going against the rules"? Yes; there have been". I also went on to explain that "these kinds of movies have to be taken with a grain of salt as in many of them, "poetic license" is justified to make the movie a bit more "interesting" to the viewer. Could SOME of the instances have been "true"? Quite possibly; however, exaggerations exist and please understand that OUR Fraternity does NOT condone the demeaning or demoralizing of anyone interested in being a member of our organization".

I DID go on to explain that what bothered me most was that there were no highlighting of mandatory library hours each night nor display of candidate social action project participation during the candidates' initiation process. Did I ALWAYS agree with some things that happened during MY personal quest to join the organization? No; however, THIS is why we are here at this Conference: to make positive changes within our Fraternity and our communities. She replied that "From watching the movie, I would not want my Son or family to go through what I saw; I don't think that it's worth it". Afterward, we conversed more about certain scenes from the movie, but my concluding statement asked her whether she "could go anywhere and see over 700 Black Men in suits, taking care of business, who have attended College; approximately 97% whom are College graduates? Some of these men I only see once a year, we talk about family and our dreams and sometimes we find out who has passed on. "Would you not want you your Son to be a part of that"? She smiled and responded "Yes". I then asked her to validate my parking for free and responded "No"!, with a smile.

Conversation #3 The Public Health Seminar and The Caucasian Security Guard

I am attempting to park my car in the parking lot next to the Paterson Board of Health building as I am there to volunteer a couple hours' time for the Mental and Home Safety Health Fair. A security guard (an elderly White Man) approaches and stops me, saying "Only staff can park here; you have to go to the "other" lot". I explained to him "I was asked to park here as I am here to volunteer assistance for a couple hours. I just came from the area that you're asking me to go to". He notices my hat (with the "Omega Psi Phi" Greek letters on it) and THEN says "O.K.; I was in a Fraternity "back in day" in College, so you can park (as he points to some open spaces in the parking area) over there". He also noted that "My Boss is in the next row car of parked cars" and that "He MIGHT ask me where my parking sticker is". I encouraged him "Not to worry; I promise that I'll not get his Boss involved as you are now my Fraternity Brother from another Fraternity".....

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