

Michael Jashun Edwards

What are the Odds

some. She looked at me and said, “You eat that now? You didn’t like it when I cooked it for you in high school.” And I would laugh and say, “well momma, college does change you.”

Another difference I had to adapt to - the music at Bowdoin. I had to sometimes listen to songs like Sweet Caroline or that song that goes like “Stacey’s Mom got it going it on” or the genre of music called EDM, or House music or a 10-minute-long remix of like 30 songs. In Memphis, I grew up predominantly on R&B, Soul, and Hip-Hop/Rap and now coming to Bowdoin, I had to break out of my narrow-mindedness and be open to new things - even the musical ones. And even in these moments, I had to remember “the odds” of me being here.

At first, I kept myself enclosed in an antisocial cloud because of how vastly different Bowdoin’s environment was. Because of my socio-economic background, I felt very out of place at times when I heard comments from some of my peers about their summer travels to expensive places around the world or talk of endless supplies of Patagonia gear. But surprisingly, it didn’t take long for me to find that group of people that made me feel welcomed and included in an environment like Bowdoin. My roommates were people of color, and they all came from different socio-economic backgrounds and locations from around the world, but we realized that no matter what our background was, that wasn’t an important factor in determining whether we could all be best friends. My first year dormmates from Maine Hall, the Bowdoin Men’s Rugby Team, and my co-workers at the McKeen center, Upward Bound, and Jack McGee's Pub, all helped me break from that cloud I was once in. It’s amazing how we all got to know each other so quickly. And so, I owe a special thanks to Bowdoin’s efforts in emphasizing that community and belonging are two of the many essential core values of the college.

And so, throughout these four years, I have learned about the importance of community, supporting one another, and taking advantage of every opportunity presented to me. I hope that we all have gained and learned from our four years at Bowdoin because there are thousands of young people who would do anything to be in this position **we** are in right now. To all the people that helped get *me*

