

Destiny's Pursuit of Greatness

My goal was to create a story which was relatable to many women of color. I want to show the drive that gets so many of us out of hard situations growing up, and carries us to success. I also wanted to show that sometimes even with a family that is encouraging you, you may need other people in your life to offer wisdom. The main character, who is pictured by many different young women and girls, is called Destiny. She is named destiny because she was always meant to use her mind to make things better for herself and others, it's just obstacles that get in the way of her destiny. Destiny is pictured throughout the story by different women and girls because I believe many of us can see ourselves in this story. In a world where women are empowered and empower each other every woman can identify with multiple characters in the story. If I've learned anything from the two WLI events this past week, it's that community support is important. I want to show people how important mentorship is to equity. The advantages non-minoritized people often have lie in the guidance and support they receive from their families and inner circles. Many people don't have families or networks who are equipped to guide them in the workplace or arenas surrounding higher education. The more access minority individuals have to mentors the more likely they are to succeed. As a black woman, who has attended my fair share of MSU talks and events, I was pleasantly surprised to see women who look like me speaking on a panel. It is not something I see often, but I enjoyed the subject matter that applied directly to the struggles I may encounter as my career progresses. These are the type of women I aspire to be, and I am grateful for the exposure to them, their wisdom, and stories.

I aspired to tell a story that was inspired by my experience at the WLI webinars. I felt that I was exposed to new ideas that will help me grow to understand how to handle situations in my career. While I have been exposed to a great deal of black female professionals and scholars in my home life, I wanted to focus on what this would look like on a wider scale. If more young women, particularly those who do not have extensive networks or highly educated families, were exposed to events of this nature. What an impact it would have! I wanted to tell the story of the young woman who would benefit from this, Destiny.

My call to action has two components. First, MSU works to spread, promote, and encourage events like this. The hope is that more students will be exposed to both sides of these discussions. I think the white women who showed themselves to be allies also made an impact on my life in a big way. They set the standard for understanding, compassion, and

concern regarding issues of race. I think I was exposed to what I should expect of my friends and those in my workplace. Inequality can be based on lack of exposure and our university culture needs to normalize these stories and make everyone feel that their struggles are valued. The second aspect of my call to action is based on personal sentiments. I believe we should all dedicate a piece of ourselves to mentoring a younger woman. Even at my stage in life, I find that I am able to give guidance to younger students I encounter. I think my life goal revolves around holding on to that value and continuing to lift other women as I climb. The WLI seems to be an organization which brings these values to life, and I hope I may one day be a source of light to other women in the same way.

The Story:

Destiny has always had a **Love for learning**. Like her mother she is very intelligent. Her mother had it hard growing up, so she wasn't able to go to college. However, from the moment Destiny was born, her mother promised to do everything she could to make sure she could achieve all her dreams. She pushed Destiny, and taught her about hard work and dedication. Her mom is the reason she is where she is today, she was always **A mom who Wanted Her Child To Go Further**. Destiny knew she wanted to excel, she put in the effort, and began **Working to Reach Her Goals**. Even when things weren't easy, and she had a lot going on at home, she made it work. After all of her efforts, with support from her family, she got **A Chance To go further**. She was accepted into Michigan State University and though she had a bit to catch up on, her hard work carried her through. She was able to keep up with her work and eventually she graduated, and her **Education Opened Doors** for her. She not only made it out of college but she was able to find a wonderful job which catapulted her into her career. But as she began making her way up the corporate ladder, she found that obstacles presented themselves again at work. She found it difficult to navigate issues of race, or to know how to fight against bias and discrimination in the workplace. She learned of the **Struggle In The Workplace** that so many black women have to face. Although **Navigating This New World Was Not Easy** she was lucky to find **A Seasoned Woman Who Understood** her struggles. When she received **Guidance And Mentorship** she was able to realize **Invaluable Wisdom Leads To Growth**. Destiny, now a woman who is set in her career is not able to **Come Into her Own** with a support system which includes women in the workplace who encourage and guide her. The story ends with Destiny **Passing Her Knowledge On** to someone who reminds her of her past self. In the same way that the

panelists from both sessions passed on their experiences to offer wisdom to rising students at MSU.