

Nyesha Dixon: Public Safety Officer

“Housing Our Story interview” with Sophia Lola and Moufidatou Adedoyin

November 7, 2018

- Sophia Lola: Hi, this is Sophia Lola. I am here with Officer Nyesha Dixon, a security officer here at Johns Hopkins. Today is November 7th, 2018; it's about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and we are in the basement of AMR 2 to do this interview. So, would you mind starting off for me just by telling me about where you grew up?
- Nyesha Dixon: Well, I grew up here in Baltimore, Maryland, on the west side of town—which is considered the West Side. I actually grew up in an area called Edmondson Village. That's actually on the west side—like I said, the west side of Baltimore, that's basically it as far as where I grew up. That's in the 21229 area, just in case ... area code wise.
- Sophia Lola: What did you think of Baltimore as a kid growing up here?
- Nyesha Dixon: I've always loved my city, I did. I loved my city growing up. It was a lot of good things to do when I was little, it was a lot of things to get into. It was a lot more things open. We had a lot more options, and things to attend; for instance, like recs, and things of that nature, which kind of no longer exist. It's kind of up until I got older, that I kind of start to lose the feel for my city, because of all of the things that has taken place over the years, and just what the city has become.
- Sophia Lola: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Nyesha Dixon: That's my personal opinion. So, I could get into further detail if you need me to, to be specific.
- Sophia Lola: Yeah, I'd love to.
- Nyesha Dixon: Would you like to know ... why the feel is different? Okay. Well, basically, like I said, growing up as a child everything was all fun, it was a bunch of things to do. I was raised around a good family; I was more spoiled than some of my friends that I grew up around. So, I was able to do a lot more; we traveled, and things of that nature. Like I said, I lived in a good area.
- Nyesha Dixon: I wasn't really ... what do I want to say, I really wasn't out in front of a lot of crime, and everything—at one point in time of growing up in my life. But, it's like I said, it was up until I started to get a little older—maybe teenage wise growing up, able to drive, and to get out from where I actually was growing up

to actually get more into the city—things of that nature—is where things start taking a turn for me, because I started to see other things that I didn't like.

Sophia Lola: Yeah, yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: I didn't like. Meaning, as far as when I was saying I didn't like, I witnessed drugs, and shootings, and all kinds of things like that. Even seeing family members getting high, and things of that nature, and was just in total shock. Like, is this what the streets, and city of Baltimore have to offer to us as people?

Nyesha Dixon: Yeah, so it made me, drugs alone, made me started to hate the city. When I started to see people, especially my people, or my family, or family of my friends on drugs, or things of that nature, and just watching them bringing them down, that's a hurtful feeling.

Nyesha Dixon: I had a friend, the first time I ever saw her mother getting high—I saw her cop the drugs, but she didn't know I saw her cop the drugs. But it crushed me, because my friend she of course thought highly of her mom. And actually, her mom worked for the Post Office at this time. So, I would never think that seeing her ... I'm thinking everything is all together. So, to watch her purchase drugs it was like, "What the hell?" So, I wound up telling my friend, because it didn't sit right with me. But it was crazy, because when I did it was like she didn't want to believe me. So, she kind of got mad with me thinking ... I know her, it was out of hurt that she was angry. But she got mad at me, because I told her. I guess it was something that she'd rather not had known.

Nyesha Dixon: So, going forward with that, once she found out her mom would start getting high it became violence between her, and her mom. She started to lose respect for her mom; started calling her junky, and all the [inaudible 00:04:31] name, and all kind of things. Whatever money, or support that she was felt like she was supposed to take of them with, she felt like she was outside getting high with. So, it just turned a whole lot of stuff around with that. So, I was hurt behind that, because I felt like I destroyed a family situation. That was one thing. So, that was another thing for drugs.

Nyesha Dixon: Then, an uncle of mine ... got high, and one day I see him fighting the air. I didn't know what was going on with that. So, I was asking, I said, "What is wrong with you that you off fighting the air?" Then he's making all this noise, and doing all this crazy, goofy stuff. So, my grandmother said, "Oh, he's high." "He high?" I'm like, "He's high?" "Yeah, he's high, fighting air." So at first, I found it funny, but then as I start looking at him I'm like that stuff really got him going crazy. So, I started crying. So, my cousin said, "What are you crying for?" I said, "What is wrong with him?" Like, anything that'll make you do like that why would you want to have that, or take that?

Nyesha Dixon: So, just to watch stuff like that, and then to go around in the city, and to see people on the corners, just nodding out. It makes you just be like, "I don't want

to be around here." You understand what I'm saying? Nobody wants to go somewhere—not even getting nothing to eat, not being smart, or nothing like that, because we're all human—but, you don't want to be ordering your food sitting next to somebody on the side leaning in all like this on you, that's uncomfortable. Then, I don't even know if I want to eat here. Some people that get high do some nasty stuff. They don't wash their hands, they sniff snot out their—oh I've seen it, blow snot out their nose into their hand, it's a mess. So, yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: Now, far as like the homes, and things, and the recreations, and school, the young children today they don't have anywhere to go. They don't have anything to do. Like I was saying, we had a lot of things like recs, and playgrounds, and things like that we could play. I remember as a child we used to play baseball. I couldn't really play basketball that well, but I tried to play basketball. We had big sliding boards, swings. Now, you go around these areas here in Baltimore, outside of the nicer parts, is none of that. So, this is what resorts children to getting into other things. Robbing people, and out on the corner at young ages selling drugs, getting into all kind of other things that they shouldn't even be into, because they don't have anywhere to go.

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: They don't have anywhere to go; anywhere to go. So, they get bored, so it's like, "I need something to do. I need something to do." Then, it's not always the right thing to do. So, this is like they find humor into doing the wrong things. And, only bad thing about that is the parents of these children is quick to point the finger at everybody else. So, they don't think that they are the problem, or their children are the problem themselves. I wish nowadays it could be better, more recs, and things like that. But, honestly, I believe the way that it has turned, even if they did create recs, and stuff, and things right now, they would turn all of that into drug areas too, because it's gotten that bad.

Sophia Lola: So, you said you started to notice some of this when you were a little bit older. So, can we go back to when you were a little bit younger?

Nyesha Dixon: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Sophia Lola: Can you tell me just about what school was like for you, and your family? And, I guess if these were things that you weren't really into, how you sort of stayed away from that?

Nyesha Dixon: Okay. Well, when I was younger I went to Catholic school. I went to Catholic school growing up. So, again, private school was just—a lot of parents couldn't afford it. You had to pay tuition. Of course, private schools are most of the time in the better, quieter areas.

- Nyesha Dixon: I was always around areas growing up that had playgrounds, that had places for us to do, that gave extra activities, and things like that. Like, my school always took field trips; always showing us something different. The farm, the science centers— things like that. It was always something educational. We didn't have time to really see a lot of the things that was going on in the actual city streets.
- Nyesha Dixon: As far as my family, like I said, I grew up in a nice home, in a nice area. I did not grow up with both of my parents, but my mom she did make a good way for me. And, my grandparents, they were good. When I say they were good meaning career-wise, career-wise. So, they were financially stable, so it was like I didn't have to live in the, I'm going to say poverty. I hate to say poor parts, but the more ran down areas. I didn't have to live in there.
- Nyesha Dixon: Now, I did have family that did live in those areas, but I never really visited. And, if I did it was always a concern, because of the things that always did take place. So, they would never really let me stay there a whole lot. You understand? So, it was like I really never was around long enough to actually get a feel of what was going on.
- Sophia Lola: Yeah.
- Nyesha Dixon: Yep. But, that's why I said when I got a little older, and I started driving, I was able to take myself where I wanted to go. I had no one telling me don't go there. I mean, they could tell me, but if I choose to go, I'm going to go, and that's what happened. I went anyway. That's when I started seeing, like, "Wait a minute." So, yeah. Anything else with the back-home thing?
- Sophia Lola: No, I think we'll take a little bit more of a turn to focus on Hopkins for a sec.
- Nyesha Dixon: Okay, that's fine.
- Sophia Lola: I guess, since you grew up in Baltimore when did you feel Hopkins as a presence at all? When did Hopkins figure into your life before you really started working here in any way?
- Nyesha Dixon: I actually was born in Johns Hopkins. Yes, I was born, but I mean that's not a feeling, I was just told that I was born here. But it says it ... I was born at Johns Hopkins. But, Johns Hopkins as a feel, the first feel of Johns Hopkins I've ever felt was the hospital. Of course, I think that's everybody's feel, first feel of actual Johns Hopkins is the hospital, but it wasn't through me.
- Nyesha Dixon: I actually had a friend that got their head bust and had to be rushed—though it wasn't Shock Trauma—we were taken over to Johns Hopkins where they stitched him all up, and everything. But, as far as the feel of it I don't like hospitals period. It don't matter which one it is, I just don't like hospitals. For

Johns Hopkins I love what Johns Hopkins do. I think they the bomb. We all over the world, we're on the water, everywhere. So, Johns Hopkins is the bomb seriously. That's my feel of Johns Hopkins, of knowing, growing up, and researching, and really knowing. Being as though I found out growing up that Johns Hopkins is a research hospital, for me that's a major plus too. A lot of hospitals here are not research. By the time you go back, you get seen, you go back, they going to tell you everything about yourself, everything, as soon as you get back there. Now as far as here, do you need to know anything about the college itself?

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: Well, I've been working here for three years for the college, on the college site. And, you know, everything takes some getting used to. It was a different experience for me. Not saying I never worked around people, or teenagers, or kids, or people in college. I just never worked in a college before. I just thought it was different. It's more on the calmer side for me, which I am so at peace with. I'm used to working in the crazier areas again. But I like the experience, that's why I think I'm still here. The children are always sweet, some of them become my babies, and I cry when they graduate, and stuff. So, that means you will become one (laughs).

Nyesha Dixon: Everybody here that works here, on either side, as far as the administrative side, as far as security, they're so sweet to me. Everybody don't get that same treatment, but they're so sweet to me, they are. Do I need to be more specific about the experience of it?

Sophia Lola: No, I just want to backtrack a little bit.

Nyesha Dixon: That's fine. No, do whatever you have to do.

Sophia Lola: What other jobs did you hold before coming here? How did you come to work here?

Nyesha Dixon: Okay. Well, actually, I was a supervisor for Amazon; (laughs) yes, when they first opened. I liked working for Amazon, but the work became a little too extreme for me. As you get older your body breaks down, you're not going to be able to do a lot of things like you used to. I felt like it was too strenuous, and I needed something more relaxing.

Nyesha Dixon: I have done security before. I've done it for UPS, I've actually done it for a couple of shopping centers. Now, let me tell y'all this that you don't know. I have a gun; I have my gun permit, but Hopkins doesn't have any gun permit sites here. So, what happened with that was I wound up breaking my ankle, and that kind of messed me up with that, because you have to do agility in order to

keep, you know? And, I couldn't run at the time, so I had to find something that was more settled, but still in the field for me to keep it. I miss my hip though, because it's a lot more money. So, yeah.

Nyeshia Dixon: But, mostly as far as that, all my life, besides me doing security, and being a supervisor at Amazon, I was mostly a cashier, customer service, in the customer service field. I love people, I've learned how to handle them, especially the public. It took some years, it took some *years*, but it worked (laughs). That's a learning experience, if you want to know if you can get out here ... I'm sorry, if you can do customer service I believe you can do *anything*. You have to literally deal with people ... so many different kind of people, every single day, all day. That's a lot, because you got a lot of up, and down, so it's a lot, it's a lot.

Nyeshia Dixon: Now, somebody has thrown a lamp at me; I've been called out my name; I've been cursed at; I've been called all kinds of names; all kind of stuff. But you just have to know how to take it with a grain of salt, and still stay professional. Once you can master that you'll be good. But, yeah, it was because of how I broke my ankle is how I came over more to this side with the calmer. I was mostly like do the shopping centers, like doing the more harder work, having to really be on alert pray to God I don't have to draw my gun, and really shoot somebody, really, seriously. So, I like it.

Sophia Lola: Okay. So, what does your normal work day here look like?

Nyeshia Dixon: It's very relaxing, it's very relaxing, it's calm. It's real nice, because you guys are all so sweet, again. I try my best not to make nobody job hard, as long as they don't try to make my job hard. Your stay here is fine as long as everybody do what they need to do. I just don't like when I feel like some of the students play on my intelligence. I understand college, trust me. So, I get that everybody wants to have that fun factor in school, but I just think that sometimes the students don't realize that us, we have a job to do. We're not being mean, and we're not telling the students, "No, you can't really do this, because we don't want you to." It's really policy, and procedures that we have to follow, and we're also being looked at. I don't think a lot of the students know that, you understand?

Sophia Lola: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nyeshia Dixon: So, when we say you can't do this, and you know you can't do that, it's not because we try to be mean. Things happen here that ... I'm sorry, I'm going to let you know this, that sometimes it's probably not discussed. So, it's like we have to be alert of a lot of things. If we don't, the first thing when something happens it comes down on us. They want to know, "Where were you? Where were you?" They not going to wait, they going to kick you right out, "Okay, well

you're no good to us." And, replace you with the next person. But, my normal day, yeah, for the most part since I've been here has been great.

Nyesha Dixon: I've had maybe, out of the time I've been here, I maybe have had maybe one incident. That's about it, and it wasn't even with a student. I've caught a lot of drunk people trying to sneak liquor, and stuff in—I always catch that. My thing is that I don't ... I always catch people.

Sophia Lola: Probably students.

Nyesha Dixon: I always catch people trying to bring that liquor. They always want to bring it into the Freshman Quad, that's where the problem lies. You cannot have alcohol up here. I get it, it's fraternities, and sororities, and stuff. But I feel like if I ask you, "Do you have alcohol?" and you say no, then I check it, and I find like eight bottles in your box, why would you do that? Yeah. Then, they'll say, "Oh, I'm sorry," I'll say, "Well, no you're not. You're only sorry, because I caught you."

Nyesha Dixon: Now, going into the rooms with it, it's a no for me. You're under 21, you're not supposed to have it. If you're out on the field, and you're having a good time, by God, just don't fall out; as long as we ain't got to call an ambulance you fine. We can't tell y'all you can't drink no liquor. We know you can't go past these gates with it. But, as far as my normal day is, it's fine. I like coming to work.

Sophia Lola: Yeah. Can you talk a little bit more about the relationships that you have with the students? Or, with other people who work here? What are they like?

Nyesha Dixon: Well, again, the students always like ... I work mostly in the freshman, up here with the freshmen. So, it's like a new experience every year, because of course you get new freshmen every year. It's not like the freshmen go down there, and then I see them so it's the same students. I get to meet new people every year.

Nyesha Dixon: So, some you learn a little bit about them, and what they're coming to school for, and just with a lot of students what their interests are. It's just like you grow kind of close to the students, especially if you see them all the time. They're nice, and they speak, and you speak. I don't know, some of them, honestly, they need people to talk to. I've learned a lot of students here don't even want to be here; I didn't know that. I've learned some students are ... not saying they don't want to be here, meaning that they feel like they're forced through their parents to come to college. A lot of them feel like they don't know if they're going to let them down, or not. You understand?

Nyesha Dixon: A lot of them you grow a bond with them, because they come, and they talk to you about their personal life, and things like that. Then, for you to open up to me, it's like, that's special. You don't really know me enough to tell me about

your personal life, but some people need an ear to talk to. And, if you feel like I can be that ear, I think that's a good thing.

Nyesha Dixon: A lot of the staff here, I love them. Everybody always doesn't get along with some of the staff, but I love the staff. The directors, and things for JHU I love them. I love all of them—the ones I have met. The old ones, and the new ones, I love them. We get along, again, we are nice. I respect the client, they respect us. I just do what I got to do, they make sure I do what I got to do. I just try to stay out the bad email's way, and we fine. Yeah, so they give me candy, and stuff for Halloween. They send nice emails about me, and things of that nature. I am professional, I smile at everybody, I don't have a problem with anyone. I'm good. I come here just, like I said, they're easier for me, they're easier for everybody else, that's fine. That goes both ways.

Nyesha Dixon: I'm not going to call any of their names, but all of them at the Res Life, and Housing Offices, they've been really nice. They've been really nice to us. They are here to do what they have to do, it's not that they're being mean either. They have a job to do as well. It's to protect you all at the end of the day, students. It's to protect the students at all cost.

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: Yeah. I haven't had any fall-outs with anybody here, so that's a good thing. Again, so far, I feel like I'm well liked, I'm trying to keep it that way (laughs). They come, and they talk to me, I talk back. Sometimes they show me a little person, not too much, but certain personal things, maybe their dogs, or trips maybe they had taken. So, they open a little bit to me if they're going somewhere, or they agree to go somewhere. So, it's not too much, we got to stay professional at the same time. So, yeah, that's all I can really say about that. I don't get to really move around too much, so it's not like, yeah.

Sophia Lola: Is there any work here that you do that you think maybe goes unseen, or underappreciated by co-workers, or students?

Nyesha Dixon: Yes, I do. I think what I do here ... I think we are underappreciated a lot. We don't have a lot of areas we can be. A lot of things that is given to the offices, or certain things, or whatever side, or whatever case, I feel like we just overlooked. The one thing I have a problem is the respect level, of how I feel like maybe some of the students carry it.

Nyesha Dixon: When I say that means, some will come up to us as if we work for you. Yeah, we work for you, but in a sense we don't. We're here to make sure you're fine. So, you can't come up to me, and order me to do something. Where's the respect, like so I'm here for nothing. So, if you think you can just come up to me, and tell me, "Hey, can you open the gate? Can you do that?" "No, I cannot. I don't know

who you are." But, on certain sides, like if you go on the opposite side of the campus, it's like they don't do that. They acknowledge you; they show you their badges, they want you to know, okay. And, these are the people that's getting paid the big money. So, it's like why can't the students that's come here to learn to do the same thing? On this side is just a little bit more rough to deal with than on the other side.

Nyesha Dixon: But, far as yes, I don't think we're looked at enough on this side. I just think we could be better appreciated. Hopefully in due time it gets better. Instead of them pointing out all of the wrong stuff, I would like for them to start at least pointing the good stuff that we do. I never really hear too much about that. I always hear about something else, something wrong going on versus ... so, I don't like that.

Sophia Lola: Can you tell me about one of your best experiences working here at Hopkins?

Nyesha Dixon: One of my best? I'm still working on that (laughs). Like I said, my best experience here is you all, getting to know you all. That's my whole purpose of being here, you understand? You guys are the reason why I'm here. Without the students I have no purpose of being at the college, period.

Nyesha Dixon: Then, I guess learning different things about a lot of the students. Like I said, attachments, difference between, just learning new people. Honestly, learning new cultures, because everybody's so diverse you learn a lot, you learn a lot. So, that's a good experience. I've learned a lot of things, and a lot of things I didn't know that a lot of cultures do. That's a good experience that I do have here, learning the students, besides getting attached to you all, basically. I don't really have a lot to ride on with it, because some of it just touch, and go; "Hey," click, and keep it moving. So, okay? Was that good enough?

Sophia Lola: Yeah, of course, of course. Then, on the flip side, is there a not so great experience that you feel comfortable telling us about, about working here at Hopkins?

Nyesha Dixon: The only thing I really don't like that I can say is I just feel like on my side I feel like anybody can say anything ... this is just what I feel. I'm not saying this is what is true, but it's what I feel. I feel like anybody can say anything, and it's really like we have no fight, or say so. It's just like, 'this was said, so this is what it is.' I just don't feel like that's fair, but that's my opinion. I'm not sure that's really how it go it just seems like that's always the outcome where the other friend goes, "What happened to this person?" It's like, "Oh, such and such said whatever, so they're gone." What? Or, they're moved, or something of that nature. But then it'll be other stuff, so they may come back, and they may not. I

just think it's too Houdini-ish. You can just say, "Hey," snap my finger, "Okay, well what happened?" I don't like that. Yeah, that's what I don't like.

Sophia Lola: Yeah, what else? I guess is there a way that you can see the university changing that? Or, is there anything about the university in general that you wish was a little different?

Nyesha Dixon: No. So far what I can see I don't know too-too much about what's going on, on the opposite, so I really couldn't speak on it. But what I see as far as the university, no it's fine. I guess I would actually have to sit down, and do some research, a little bit more research on the actual college, and to actually know what's really going on around deep inside the college to know. Right now, I don't see anything that's going on wrong with the college at all, I don't. I think Johns Hopkins, like I said, is the bomb. We're, is it number 10 still, or number nine?

Sophia Lola: Yeah, I think it's 10 (laughs).

Nyesha Dixon: Number 10. But, that's a good thing, number 10. You know how good that look on your resume? Do you know, seriously?

Sophia Lola: I know.

Nyesha Dixon: I always told students, I say, "You know what? Y'all are already winning, and you don't even know it." I said, "I wish I had known what I know now as an adult than what I did *then*." My whole life would be totally different. I see students worry, and say, "After school, I don't know, I don't know if it's going to get me a job." Trust me honey when they see that on your (laughs), you already got a job. You don't even have to finish college, you still can be in school, and get a good job, a good career. They see that you even attend the college, you understand? That alone speaks volumes. I know it's easier said than done, because y'all are still growing up going through it, but trust me, I already been passed them years. It's good. You'll be good. Y'all going to be all right, y'all going to be rich. So, I'm glad y'all my friends. I need doctors, and things. I'm going to get old (laughs).

Sophia Lola: What time are we at? It started at 53.

Moufidatou Adedoyin: We're at 28:49.

Sophia Lola: Okay.

- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Yeah, for the record this is Moufidatou Adedoyin [inaudible 00:28:59], another student in the Black Narratives class. So, I wanted to ask: do you still live in the city?
- Nyesha Dixon: I do, I do still live in there. And, unfortunately I've grown up, and I couldn't afford to live in the good areas. So, I have to live in the city where all the, I'm not going to say where all the crime is—because where I live is pretty decent. But, not far from me is not really a nice place. So, yeah, I do still live in the city.
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Do you have any family? Have you made a family here? Or, are you still, not alone, but-
- Nyesha Dixon: Well, I have a fiancé—well, I can't consider him that anymore, but yeah, he's out the door. But, yeah, I have had a relationship with someone I've been with for the past 12 years now, but we're departing. So, and I know that's personal, but it's okay. So, that means we're moving out from with each other. So, now I'm in the process of trying to find somewhere else to move. I'm looking for a decent area, because that's my biggest thing is location. Like I said, the way things have turning out, I didn't tell you guys ...
- Nyesha Dixon: Last year, I actually got stabbed. Actually ... if you can see on my forehead. I got sliced, and I got stabbed. It's minor now, but here, and on my face. My breast is where, that almost killed me; it was an inch away from my heart. This was just last year, that February; I was at Shock Trauma. It all came from, again, trying to break up a fight that had absolutely nothing to do with me. That's the stuff you witness, and you go through when you're in the city, because things like that happen. You don't want to see nobody fighting, you know, young. I didn't know the people, or anything, just trying to strictly break up a fight. I don't know if somebody thought I was jumping in the fight, and was trying to bank the person, and I got stabbed. So, location for me is a big deal.
- Sophia Lola: Yeah. You mentioned having a grandson last week?
- Nyesha Dixon: I do. I have a grandson, he's four years old. I have a daughter, she's 23, yes. My daughter, actually she goes to college too. She goes to Catonsville Community College [CCBC Catonsville], or whatever, but that's okay. She's doing good. I'm proud of her. But, yes, I have a grandson, he's four years old. Our birthday is one day apart.
- Sophia Lola: Awe, that's sweet.
- Nyesha Dixon: He was my pre-birthday gift forever. He's so adorable.
- Sophia Lola: Yeah.

- Nyesha Dixon: Yep.
- Sophia Lola: Then, I guess sort of like with your relationship to Baltimore, how do you feel about having your family in Baltimore?
- Nyesha Dixon: That is a concern I do every day. Not even just my grandson, I have brothers, and things like that. Not saying that my sister is any safer, but she's smart enough—and I hate to say it like that—she's smart enough to place herself in places where she doesn't want to be or feel like it's comfortable. Now, far as my brother, he's a little bit more different. He don't mind being out in society in the world. He feels like anything can happen anywhere you want to go, and where you go, which is true. But I just feel like, if you could be as cautious as possible why even go somewhere where you know things happen, and that's him. So, he has my blood pressure to the roof all the time.
- Nyesha Dixon: But, as far as my grandson, I'll be concerned, yes. My daughter is not always the brightest when she goes around certain places, and she has him with her. Not saying I don't love my daughter, because I love her to death. But you're grown now, I can't tell you where, and where not to go. My concern is if you do, don't have him in certain places. Then, the father, I can't tell him not to take their son certain places, because that's *your* son. But, yeah, it's a bit concerned, pressure to the roof with that as well, because anything can happen.
- Nyesha Dixon: Recently, maybe over the summer, somebody I know—and you guys may have seen it on the news—her daughter got killed, seven years old. That was one of my friend's, friend's daughter. So, all of that strikes concern for me, because it's like you never know where you're going, what you're getting into, and who it effects. She was seven; she had nothing to do with none of that. So, that's what I'm saying, those kind of things concern me when my daughter take him out.
- Nyesha Dixon: I always try to get him, bring him over here with grandmom, I'm good with that. She does, but she kind of hogs him, because she's spoiled. His other grandmom on this side, she doesn't really live in the really bad areas, so I don't mind when he's over there as well. But, as far as when she has him wherever she's going, and that father's side of the family, it kind of concerns me, because they are deep in where a lot of craziness is going on, and he's out in the streets—if you know what I mean. Yeah, so ...
- Nyesha Dixon: Now, I'll tell you guys y'all be careful out here too.
- Sophia Lola: Again, outside of Hopkins, what else do you like to do with your time? Any hobbies, or community organizations that you do anything with?
- Nyesha Dixon: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, this is funny. I like to party, not as much as I used to, every now, and then. But, for the most part, I like bowling, and I cannot bowl—

is that funny? I like to do everything that I cannot do. I like bowling, I find interest in pool, shooting pool, but I'm not good at it.

Sophia Lola: Neither am I.

Nyesha Dixon: Seriously, but I find some fun in it. I did like to skate, until I broke my ankle. So, everything about thinking about skates hurts to me, because I just keep thinking about falling. So, it's like no. Any regular hobby though, like naturally. I don't like the movies anymore, maybe because Firestick has come out (laughs). I don't like to movies too much anymore, it has gotten boring. I just don't think a lot of really good movies are out; worth going to see.

Nyesha Dixon: As far as community work, I don't really get to get out too much to do any community work honestly. I know people say, "Well, if you can find time to do this, you can find time to do that." It's nothing really community going on here, and if it is I don't know too much about it. I would like to get into rehabbing homes, that's something that I find other interest in. There's so many vacant homes in the city. Have y'all driven, and went through the city?

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: Did you see? It's a mess.

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: I would love to take those, and refurbish them homes, and get some money. That's a project I would love to work on, but I need the resources to know how to begin that. People these days, they don't want to help you, because they want it all for themselves. So, we'll see.

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Nyesha Dixon: Yep. So, if I can help rebuild the city that would be nice. That would be a good community project.

Sophia Lola: Yeah. Do you have any plans for after Hopkins? Or, are you planning on staying here for a while? [crosstalk 00:36:38]

Nyesha Dixon: Right now, I'm here, but I do plan to move ahead. Honestly, today I was looking into radiology—sonographing, and radiology, because I wanted to do that. I found growing up and going to school I had a problem with finishing things if I didn't keep interest in it too long. I wanted to be a lawyer growing up, I wanted to be a criminal defense attorney, or I wanted to be a corporate lawyer. But it wasn't that I didn't find interest in it, it's just I didn't have all the tools, I didn't go to school for it, so it was like, "Maybe later."

Nyesha Dixon: I tried getting into phlebotomy, I lost interest *quick*. Dropped the class, didn't want it. I've learned that now I have an interest with just normal stuff. I'm older, so it's like I don't want to ... So, medical billing, and coding, or sonography, radiology, if I'm going to go into the medical field anywhere during that time. That's where I'm going to go with that. So crazy, I just looked into that today. And, if not, I would love to go back to being a carrier in security. I'm going to be honest; it's because I need the money, they pay more. Depending on where you work, or who you work for the benefits may be much better. So, they have a better retirement, and pension, and stuff. I want to sit on my porch with a nightgown on, with ice water, watch everybody—"Hi." That's about it.

Moufidatou Adedoyin: How did you get involved with security?

Nyesha Dixon: Honestly, 19 years old, when I was 19, I had the opportunity to be a correctional officer. Unfortunately, my mindset was somewhere else, so it wasn't a good idea. My uncle, he was actually the assistant warden at the time, so the job was really easy for me to get. But, my intentions of coming in there to be a correctional officer at that time was all wrong. So, I was talked out of it. I don't know, I just felt like it was something about the uniform that I think I wanted to wear. I think that's what it was for me at that time.

Nyesha Dixon: Again, I like any, and everything far as law enforcing, or anything of that kind of nature, anything like that. Everything except for wanting to be actual police. My favorite TV show was *Law and Order*, you understand? So, I find that I gravitate to a lot of that kind of stuff. So, I was like security is not being a police officer, and is not really in a jail doing illegal things— because at that time, that's what I was going in there to do. I was young, I didn't know, I thought that was the way to go.

Nyesha Dixon: So, I was just like security, after Amazon. I was like it's a nice, cool job, it's sit down, some sit down, some stand up. That's basically it, it really wasn't too much of the uniform, and stuff anymore. It was just basically like it was something, a field, that I wanted to try, I have a good experience with. A more positive experience with this time. That's basically what it is, yep.

Sophia Lola: Why didn't you want to be a cop?

Nyesha Dixon: No. Maybe years ago, but like I said, now, here; the police gets no respect. I honestly, my personal opinion, I don't know exactly what the police are doing, but I'm sure it's not a good thing. I don't want to associate, or affiliate myself with no team like that. You understand what I'm saying? That's not good.

Sophia Lola: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nyesha Dixon: Even as a cop, I don't think that would be a good thing, period. Again, I would have grief every day. You remember how you asked me earlier, "How was my day at work?" it would totally go nothing like that I'm sure. The minute you get pulled over, you already have an attitude, right? I know I would. Then, not only that; it's so fearful now, because cops are killing people. You don't know what you're up against, so I wouldn't even want nobody to feel like I'm risking myself coming to your car, because I don't even know how you may feel. You might be doing something illegal, I don't know. I could've just interrupted. People, they shoot first, and pull off. I don't want to go to work being like that. So, no, no cop.

Sophia Lola: Yeah. I guess with that, how do you feel about Hopkins considering enlisting a private police force here on campus?

Nyesha Dixon: I don't see a problem with that. That's okay. That's maybe a good thing. Honestly, if it's to better protect you guys—because we don't have guns—I will be all for that. I wish they would've let us have ... It's better. I'm sure it's a lot of things that take place around the campus. I don't know if some of the students know their boundaries; I'm taking it some of them don't. I don't know if it's because they're out having a good time, I don't know. But, it's like they wear into certain areas, or they act like they want to be friendly with the students, because they feel like they don't know better, and the whole time they're setting them up. So, that's not a good thing. It's kind of creepy, it's kind of scary, because it's like ... It's bad, because you can tell the students, "Don't do this. Don't do that," "Look out for this, look out." Some of them just be like, "Whatever."

Nyesha Dixon: One lady, she said, "That guy asked me for some change." She went and took her wallet out, and he snatched the whole thing, and ran. I said, "He knew what he was doing. That was his way of getting you to take your wallet out." You got to be careful.

Sophia Lola: Yeah. I think you mentioned a few minutes ago saying if you had known whatever it is that you know now as an adult you think your life would've gone really differently?

Nyesha Dixon: Oh yes, oh yes. Go ahead.

Sophia Lola: How so?

Nyesha Dixon: How? Like I said, knowing what I know now, and how important education really is, and furthering your education is. I understand college is not for everybody, but again, knowing how much a piece of paper could take you further, how much it overrides things. Excuse me, I'm not saying that would be the only

reason why I would have went back to school, it's one of the reasons. But, again, to further your education itself, period.

Nyesha Dixon: Some people say, "College, and things, they tell you to go so they can dumb you down." No, it's all in what you put in it, and get out of it. Like I said, that paper speaks volumes. Not necessarily saying, "Johns Hopkins you're a 10; that's extra volumes." But I'm saying just having a degree itself. I could be trying to get this job for five years, you understand? I could be in line, I could already be working in the place I need to be, but I might want this position. And, I could've been working there five years, have all this experience, but you get right out of college, and you know what, you went to school for the same thing, and I'm sitting up here working for these experiences. But, guess who they going to give that job to? You, just because you hold it—and you're fresh. Like, "Oh, she really just started learning. She's fresh on the mind; bring her in."

Nyesha Dixon: Again, a lot of the mistakes I have done, not saying my daughter is not a blessing, but if I could've waited on that I would have. I lost a lot of ... young, teenage adult, because I had a baby. So, I had a responsibility early; my friends could do what they want to do. I had to find babysitters, and daycare, and rides, and hospital days when she wasn't feeling good. So, it's like I felt like I grown up early. Having a baby young will definitely grow you up, take your time, as long as you need, take it, seriously.

Nyesha Dixon: School is never too late. So, that's not an issue. Like I said, a lot of mistakes I've done, and just finishing school at the timeframe when I could have, I would have done it. My life would be different. Knowing what I know far as about finances, and credit, and all of that, knowing all that stuff now, if I'd known that then—oh please, I'd be somewhere sitting back now. We wouldn't even be having this interview. Yep.

Sophia Lola: Do you have any other questions?

Moufidatou Adedoyin: No.

Sophia Lola: What time are we at?

Nyesha Dixon: 45:32

Moufidatou Adedoyin: That's good.

Sophia Lola: Yeah, well thank you so much.

Nyesha Dixon: This was fun.

Sophia Lola: Yeah.

Moufidatou Adedoyin: Yeah.

- Nyesha Dixon: You sure y'all ain't got nothing else for me? Were we good?
- Sophia Lola: Is there anything else that you just want to tell us?
- Nyesha Dixon: I don't know. I'm happy to see you ladies doing what you're doing. Keep it up, keep it up. I'll just tell you that on, and off the record, keep it up. Just be safe out here. You're in the streets of Baltimore. Do you hang out, out here?
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: I'm from the city.
- Nyesha Dixon: Look at you, being from the city. Where are you from?
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: I'm from the East Side.
- Nyesha Dixon: Oh lord, sike no ... I said (laughs). Now, you know what's funny? It's like they can tell if you live on the west side, and are from the east side, they say it's the way you dress, and the way you wear your hair. I don't know. But, when we went over there one time a guy said, "Hey, come on, let's go somewhere." They was standing there, the girls was talking about they wanted to bank us. The men were talking to us, I said, "Well what was up with that?" Yeah, I said, "Now that's crazy." And, scary, because you don't be knowing. East Side is something special. I like to go over, and have fun, but I have to come back home, like no. Okay, city girl, east side. Where you from, East Side where?
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: I live in Cedonia.
- Nyesha Dixon: Oh, you live in Cedonia. Now, Cedonia's not really bad. Well, it depends on which part.
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Nyesha Dixon: Now, if you more, or so going near Radecke on up, or certain areas, it's not bad over there. It's really quiet, and it's cool.
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Yeah.
- Nyesha Dixon: Now, when you start hitting around here like Greenmount, and all that, oh no baby, we got problems.
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Yeah.
- Nyesha Dixon: Stay away from all that, yeah. Greenmount, y'all close to that around here.
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

- Nyesha Dixon: It's a lot of junkies. [crosstalk 00:47:29] So, you've seen off the Fentanyl where they laid to the side. Yeah, it's a mess. That's all, be safe ladies. This was fun.
- Sophia Lola: Yeah. Is there anything that you hope comes from this interview whether it's now being part of some record somewhere in the universe, or anything like that?
- Nyesha Dixon: It's okay, it's all right.
- Sophia Lola: Okay.
- Nyesha Dixon: I appreciate you. That's a good feeling to know people hear me, or read about it, or whatever. It may be something for someone, it may not. Hopefully, this will do something for someone, somebody that can take heed to something, and listen to what I'm saying, or get what I'm saying. Sometimes we always don't word it the way we trying to express it. If I could've been a little bit more raw in here I would; sike, no, no, no, no. But, yeah, that's about it.
- Sophia Lola: Thank you.
- Nyesha Dixon: Thank you.
- Sophia Lola: This was really nice.
- Nyesha Dixon: This was, this was nice.
- Sophia Lola: Great, cool.
- Nyesha Dixon: Now, remember [crosstalk 00:48:37].
- Sophia Lola: What is going on?
- Moufidatou Adedoyin: Just click it?
- Sophia Lola: I believe so, yeah.