

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Student Housing Manager, Student Affairs

“Housing Our Story” interview with Alexander Egginton

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So have you done these [inaudible 00:00:03]

Alexander Egginton: No, yeah.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Have you done a lot of these before?

Alexander Egginton: I have actually not done any, I did one with my partner, it's I was doing the recording stuff, but no, I've done informal interviews. I've never had to like, get a whole mic and do the whole setup.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: It's pretty cool.

Alexander Egginton: It is. So, my first question is just, how has your day been so far? It's early but.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: The morning is always very hectic for me, because I'm usually managing myself and my daughter and my household; so it's hectic but so far so good. I was out yesterday so getting back in, I had to get some stuff done before with you and I because I have back-to-back meetings most of the day.

Alexander Egginton: So, you have one daughter?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I do.

Alexander Egginton: And you like brought her to school and stuff?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah. So, I drop her off at the bus stop then, she takes the bus and she's off on her day but she's slow. She's a 13 year old so she's [crosstalk 00:01:08] eighth grade.

Alexander Egginton: Eighth grade, wow.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So she's looking at high schools now and—

Alexander Egginton: Which school does she go to?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: She goes to Legacy School, it's in Carroll County. But we live in Howard County.

Alexander Egginton: Oh Wow.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, I commute.

Alexander Egginton: What high schools is she looking at?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: She's looking at some performing arts schools. She's sings and she plays piano and we're also looking at some of the parochial all-girl Catholic high schools that have some programs where they have some visual arts as well; so, that way it kind of ... the academic piece of it but she also has the visual arts piece.

Alexander Egginton: That's really cool.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah.

Alexander Egginton: I went to high school that wasn't technically an art school, but great programs for the arts. It's called Park School.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: You were at Park School?

Alexander Egginton: Yeah. So where did you grow up?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I grew up in New York; in New York City, Queens. And my parents were both immigrants from Haiti, so I lived in a pretty diverse community. Although, because my parents were Haitian and there's a really large Haitian population in Haiti, it was very easy to kind of just get caught up in that community. So, like we went to church, I grew up as a Catholic, but very much celebrated that also as a Haitian Catholic. So, like there were Haitian masses, Haitian churches, Haitian stores, Haitian parties; a lot of Haitian and everything.

Alexander Egginton: Was it nice at that community like within New York?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah, it was good. It was nice, because I think that I really got a good understanding of the culture; the customs; the cultural climate in terms of the community; the expectations; certainly the language. I grew up with my grandmother also in our home who didn't speak English, so we had to learn the language [Haitian Creole]. So, it was nice. There were times that was challenging because my parents very much were very selective in terms of who I associated myself with. And the Haitian

culture, it's very much like, "the people that become your friends like we need to know who their parents are." So that's very interesting to navigate as a kid who was in New York wanting to explore all things and get to know people very differently.

Alexander Egginton: Did they want you to be friends with other Haitian kids, or?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah, they did. And it was easy to do that because we frequent a lot of the same things; so, either we went to school together, or they did things as parents, other couples or other families. So, naturally there was that connection between us and the kids. So, it was myself and my brother, but I came from a very extensive family; like my dad ... both my grandmothers were available to me. And the one grandmother had six kids, they had a lot of kids, we had a lot of cousins that I grew up with; where my mom was the only child and her mother was the one who lived in our house. So, we developed a very strong bond with her just because she didn't have any other grandkids besides us. So, we got all of her attention, very fortunately. So, it was a very interesting dynamic—but a good one, I think.

Alexander Egginton: And speaking of your parents, how was their kind of style of educating you and were they strict, or were they ... you mentioned you were a Catholic, were they spiritual?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah, very spiritual. I thought they were strict; very high expectations academically, morally, very hardworking. *Very hardworking.*

Alexander Egginton: Do you think you needed those expectations set for you, like do you think looking back that was like a really good thing for you?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That was probably one of the best things, yeah; absolutely. I didn't understand it as much growing up—even though I just kind of accepted it. I wasn't one of those kids that was really rebellious, and I think part of it honestly was my relationship with my grandmother. Like I really tried to please my parents, and it was all that I knew. So, for me, I didn't really seek ... it's interesting because I look at the dynamic between my brother and I, and he was different. Like he also grew up in the same environment, but he explored things very differently than I did. But I was also their oldest so, the norms and the expectations were clearly outlined for me ... and there was also gender. There's a lot of gender differences in the Haitian community. So, you very much raise your daughters and your sons are ... kings. So, there were some expectations that were I think, were communicated. I think expectations were the same, but they were managed very differently, which was interesting because I found

myself oftentimes passing on the expectations that they had of me on him. Because I had felt like they were too soft on him. You know what I mean?

Alexander Egginton: And since you had to deal with all that, you're like you also have to ...

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Right. This is what you should be doing, like, "they're not telling you and they're kind of circumventing or tiptoeing those pieces but, let me be clear in terms of what you should be doing." Sometimes I didn't get why they were so guarded with making sure that I understood how the world operated and how people operated outside our community, but I also think that they did a good job in terms of balancing; like I didn't feel like I was deprived at all, like I felt like if there was something that I wanted to do, like my mom and my grandmother found a way to make it happen in a way that I felt comfortable. So ...

Alexander Egginton: That's really good. Growing up, did you see kind of externally, some differences in your community or your surrounding communities. Were you like kind of, did you feel like some people—you were saying you didn't feel deprived—did you see other people who kind of maybe had different situations at home and didn't have, like the expectations being set for them, like was it ... ?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I lived in a very large immigrant community. So, I think that those were the values that were being pretty much communicated throughout, whether it was from my community or someone else's community. Hard work, the spirituality piece of it I think was a component that I saw in all of the communities around me; a lot of respect, very high expectations in terms of academically being honest. I think that those were things for me that I saw throughout. And it was good; it was a large immigrant community, but we also interacted with white kids and the values were the same. So, I didn't feel like, 'there were people that are doing better than us,' and the thing is that for us ... like the community that I came from, like people were well educated; they moved to—in terms of my perspective—they moved to New York or they moved to the states because things were difficult in their countries. Like my parents [inaudible 00:09:52]. They were both educated in Haiti and left Haiti after being educated, came and met here. So, they came for two different reasons. They came separately and then ...

Alexander Egginton: For the same reasons.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Right, but then connected. So, I grew up in a home that was very politically aware. They were very anti ... at the time Haiti had the dictator

Papa Doc [Duvalier] and my mom had just finished law school in Haiti, so it was very different for—her dad was an ambassador, so it was just very different. My Dad was a writer in Haiti, so when they came here—my dad first went to Mexico—he left Haiti and had to—for political asylum there—and he was in Mexico for years and then he moved to the states. So that's why education was never like, it wasn't a question like are you going to college, like, how's this gonna work out for you?

Alexander Egginton: You were gonna do it.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: It was like you were gonna do everything that you wanted to do and the sky was the limit. So, I got that really, so like at my house, there were meetings, like my parents were very politically active against the Haitian government at the time; my dad wrote a lot; I grew up going to demonstrations in front of the UN. So, they were just really engaged: my dad, my mom, my grandmother. So, it was a very interesting.

Alexander Egginton: That sounds fascinating. So, what ended up bringing you to Baltimore, was it Hopkins or ...?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: My husband and I, we went to school in New York, it was upstate New York in Buffalo and that's where I did my ...

Alexander Egginton: That's where I was born.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Buffalo, New York? Oh my God.

Alexander Egginton: My parents worked at SUNY Buffalo before ...

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That's where I went to school.

Alexander Egginton: Oh, really?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, I worked there as well for a while—after I finished school. I worked in New York, Upstate New York so—which is just kind of really cold—for a long time.

Alexander Egginton: It's so cold.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: It was ridiculous. And my husband was from Rochester, New York, so we hung out there. We were there for probably like 10 years. We did our undergrad, graduate work there and then we got married and then we had friends who had moved to Maryland, relocated to Maryland. He

teaches so, we had just really just come just to see our friends, and he ended up leaving with a job.

Alexander Egginton: Wow.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Just crazy. And then we came and we just moved and ... he came first and I was still in New York at SUNY Buffalo and there was a job that was here, that was posted in the *Washington Post*, and he said, hey, this would be a good job for you and I applied for it and I got it.

Alexander Egginton: So, this was your first job here?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: At Hopkins and I've been here for 23 years.

Alexander Egginton: Wow, wow. That's crazy.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, it was meant to be.

Alexander Egginton: I can't imagine like going somewhere for vacation, taking some [crosstalk 00:13:06] big bag, but a job? That's crazy.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: We had no idea. They interviewed—he teaches science, so there was a big push in that county, where they were looking for male black science teachers.

Alexander Egginton: So, he's a high school, public school?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: He's high school. And he was a biology major, so he just combines his ... so he ended up getting a degree in biology education and they just worked. Some of his students have come to Hopkins.

Alexander Egginton: Really? That's really cool.

Alexander Egginton: My chemistry teacher, his wife also works here. So, I had him last year and then now I see his wife around and it's just, it's funny.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That's crazy.

Alexander Egginton: I know, it's just crazy.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, you connect so very different because your parents work here.

Alexander Egginton: Yeah.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, you're kind of their friends, or like some of their colleagues.

Alexander Egginton: Yup. I'm taking courses with people I've kind of grown up around.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That is hilarious.

Alexander Egginton: Which is weird, but also ...

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Awesome.

Alexander Egginton: Yeah. It's cool.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, do you feel any pressure like having your parents here and then having kind of like your surrogate aunts and uncles here?

Alexander Egginton: A little bit. Though I will say that their closest friends are probably not their colleagues just because ... my dad's a writer and my mom's a filmmaker so they both are like, they're definitely involved here, but they're ...

Regine Laforest-Sharif: They just do stuff outside.

Alexander Egginton: They just do stuff outside, I'd say; like both of their friends, their friends are kind of their long-term friends from when they were growing up, of course, they have friends here and I've met a lot of the professors. It's definitely an interesting dynamic. I'm kind of scared to like disappoint them or like, I don't know.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I know, I can imagine how that would be.

Alexander Egginton: So far, it's been good.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: And you're a freshman?

Alexander Egginton: Yeah.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, we'll see how three years [inaudible]. That's awesome though.

Alexander Egginton: So, this is a question about your job. What kind of work do you do that nobody knows that you do?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That's interesting. Well, what I think that has been unique about me in this place for 23 years has been the person who is a kind of fills in the gap. Like I think that—pretty consistently—that things that are not done are the things that I've always stepped into and managed and handled without people saying, “this needs to be done.” So, I think that I've provided that leadership pretty consistently. So, I'm often the person who's the observer and the person who's looking at it on the larger scale, but who's very detailed as well. So ... because when I don't do it, it's like who's doing it? But I never like that to happen, because I'm very much a planner. And the thing that's very different about probably my experience too is that, I don't know how much you know about housing, but like the work that I'm responsible for doing is a lot of housing operations.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, assigning the students; handling the staffing and the mail room; making sure that students are notified of policies and procedures as it relates to housing. But the other piece of it is, prior to getting here, coming here, I did a lot of the supervising of the RAs and the staff that lived in. So, I have that perspective in a very different way because not only am I strong administratively, but in terms of the programmatic piece. So, I kind of see the importance of the connection and understand that because I've done it other places. So, I think that that has allowed me to manage people, manage decisions, manage policy development in a very different way. I also think the fact that I am a person who is very committed to diversity and inclusion. I think part of it is growing up in New York, and also the experiences that I've had professionally, I think have leant themselves to being very beneficial to the way that we've approached our work and being able to make sure that when we're making decisions that were being very inclusive in our thoughts and our ideas. I think that that's something that I'd done pretty.

Alexander Egginton: That's ... I mean, that's important.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah, especially at this place. And I think sometimes people are like ...

Alexander Egginton: Why do you say that?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I think that Hopkins sometimes, it's hard to navigate itself because, not because of the intent necessarily, but I think that we're so decentralized that there's not always ... people are doing things in a lot of different pockets and I think that sometimes that's great because it's absolutely ... I think supports the idea of being, very creative, like if I have an idea I can run with it, if I can make it work and it sounds and then

other people might be doing the same thing; but, I think that there's a benefit to sometimes bridging some of that work and getting some of that synergy and being able to be more, to maximize the impact very differently. And I also think that in terms of the leadership at Hopkins, I don't think that there's always been ... it's hard to be here sometimes to me in my own personal. I think that there's a lot of entitlement here.

Alexander Egginton: Do you want to speak a little bit more to that?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yeah, and I think that it's at a lot of different levels. And I think that part of it is the awareness piece that sometimes you don't know to do better if you've not been exposed to something different. And to be honest with you, I think that that's one of the things that I loved about my work in housing is because I help students understand—particularly here because students are required to live on campus for two years and sometimes they don't get it, they're like, “Why do I have to do this, why can't I live in the community? Why can't it be a choice?” And I think that there is, what I try to communicate to students is that, “there's only two, this is the only time in your life that you don't get to pick who you live with.” And to me, there's an opportunity for us to capitalize on that, particularly in terms of the student experience, very differently because of that.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Because when we leave, we're going to pick who we want to live with and the neighborhoods we wanna live in, and who will be our neighbors and who will not, like you kind of orchestrate and have much more control than when you're living in the residence halls where you're living in a space, a small space with someone who could be completely different than you or the same as you or maybe different than you physically, but in terms of your values and your experience still be the same. So, we don't know what that looks like so, enjoy it because they won't ever happen. And my thought and my experience or nine out of 10 times you gain something from that.

Alexander Egginton: Never thought about it that way, honestly. That's really interesting.

Alexander Egginton: So, speaking of, your values around diversity and inclusion. I want to get your perspective on ... so this is the third interview that I tried to set up and finally it was successful. I had to go through my professor to be able to get the right contact. But I talked to—I'm pretty close, I've talked many times to one of the security officers right outside AMR I and I talked to him about doing the interview and he seems really, really into it. And then as the week came about, his texts became kind of less and less frequent, I could tell that there was something kind of going on. And then

the day of he basically sent me a text saying that he's really sorry, but that he and his wife have decided that he just can't do it because it wouldn't be professional of him. And he said, 'it's about the professionalism of my job that I can't conduct this interview,' because I think the implication is that we're talking about not only his life but also about Hopkins as an institution.

Alexander Egginton: So after he canceled, obviously I was like, yeah, that's no problem, don't worry about it, I talked to another security guard, one of the subcontracted officials, and she told me that she couldn't do it because in her contract, like there was a clause saying you cannot conduct any interviews with anybody on campus; you can't talk to the police even if you witness something happening. So, there are lots of kinds of employment clauses.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: They are union, I think. That's sad. I mean not sad that they are unions, but I didn't realize that.

Alexander Egginton: I know, I had no idea either.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: They're bargaining unions.

Alexander Egginton: So, I don't know, like what do you think, like why is there a difference between—obviously you've been here for 23 years, you have a really like, I guess your role is not replaceable, you know things better than most. So, I feel like you have a very kind of, I don't know if it's comfortable but at least like a high status, in comparison to somebody who maybe only has worked here for like a year or two and is doing a little bit more of like a mundane job. What do you think does that say about the institution, and its like, I don't know, employment values?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That's a great question ... and it's interesting that you would say that because I think that honestly that was one of the reasons why I chose to do it, like when I heard Dr. Connolly—he conveyed or mention it at a meeting that we were at or an event. For me, I felt like my perspective or the people that were going, he was going to interview would probably provide a very different perspective than what Hopkins would want people to think people's experiences are. So, I think for me, I've been here for a long time, but I also can tell you that it's not always been easy being here. And I can tell you and I could understand why ... first of all, I didn't know that in terms of the bargaining unions—and I know that they have very different contracts, like for me, I'm not under contract.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I have my position, I'm not part of a union—so, I was never even aware that they could not. But I also can tell you that, and from my own perspective, that if then, if they spoke to you, you probably would have gotten—I'm just guessing here, I can't prove it—that you would probably have gotten earful in terms of their experience here. Because I do think that there are people that struggle at Hopkins and I've been here for 24 years and I can tell you that I've struggled here at Hopkins. So, the thing that has been fortunate for me is that I've also had experiences before I got to Hopkins. So that has kind of allowed me to navigate my experiences at Hopkins probably differently because of it.

Alexander Egginton: For sure.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I don't think that it's a coincidence that I grew up in a home where ... the people that, they left their country to come and re-established somewhere else; it doesn't get any harder than that. So, I think that for me, because of my parents' experience and because they were able to transfer that experience very differently to me, that I probably can endure things very differently than other people maybe. But like I said, before I got here, I had other experiences in other places so—for me—I don't feel like, I've probably been able to see my experiences at Hopkins and I'm like, okay, yeah, it's pretty shitty here for these reasons—not always. But, here's how I think I can navigate and kind of manage those pieces. I realized that there are people that are not as fortunate as I am. I also think for me that part of the organizations that I chose to associate myself at Hopkins have very much been organizations that people look like me. That has been intentional for me, and to be honest with you, it's been ... it's helped me survive Hopkins. It has, when I first got here, I had been—I served as the Black Faculty and Staff Association President—

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I've been at Hopkins for 23 years, probably for 18 years I was very active member; I sat on the board, I did their trainings, I chaired committees, so I also have some support within the community at Hopkins in a very different way than other people, but somebody coming in, where they are not necessarily appreciated; they may not necessarily see the connection of what they do in terms of serving our students—because for me that's what, when you were at an institution of higher learning, the students are who you are here to support mostly, from my perspective. And I gotta be honest with you, I feel like when I look at the security officers, when I look at the dining hall, when I look at the custodial staff members, I think they provide a very different support to students than those of us who are sitting in those offices.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: To be honest with you, you got; they're in your bathroom, they're where you're eating—it's just very different. And I can also tell you that when I say that Hopkins can be difficult, the other part of it too is how does Hopkins look in terms of the community, particularly when you look at the East Baltimore community; like my church is in that area, and I can tell you that it's surrounded by impoverished people that are and ... Hopkins has a bad rep in the community. If you really look, the whole idea of having people that work at those hospitals, the living wage piece—they can't even afford their insurance. There's a lot there. So, I think that for me, my work at Hopkins has always been not only the work that I do in terms of housing, but what I've done—because I've done things outside of housing because that's ... and those are the things honestly that have kept me at Hopkins.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Had I not had my affiliations outside, had I not advised student groups and develop those relationships outside of that; those are the things that help sustain my experience at Hopkins. Had I not done that, I probably would not have, because to be honest with you, when I first came I didn't even think I was gonna make two years here, because it was very different for me. I was like, "This is different." But for me as I got more connected, as, and again, there was a lot of intentionality there. It became clearer to me what I could gain from it, but also what I could do to impact other people's lives. So, if that helps.

Alexander Egginton: Yeah, that's great. That's a really good answer. Just going back to something that you said—so speak as explicitly as you'd like—but what exactly about Hopkins.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Is difficult?

Alexander Egginton: Yeah. It makes it hard to be here.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: It's hard to hear the president talk about his role to diversity or is about when his whole fucking camp, excuse me, is white men. Like I just don't get it. Like this place is tiring, it's exhausting, and I think that he very much talks because it makes him look good. I think that it's really ... there had been an increase in terms of the makeup of faculty, but I think that it was not done because he was committed to doing, it was people were holding him accountable—particularly the students—and I think that when students and staff were constantly saying, "There are other places that do a good job with getting a diverse staff or getting a diverse faculty, why is it that Hopkins can't do it when you're in the middle of a city that's mostly black? I don't get it." But then you look at the cabinet and it's still the same and the people, and quite honestly, the people that

are on the cabinet that are of color, some of them have left because they can't deal with it here.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, you have to know that—and I know that because some of them are my friends that I've worked with for years and they're like, "It's just not worth it." So I think that's part of it, I think the fact that, you have some managers that understand how to bring people together—because I think that's the other part of it too, like, we spend a lot of time at Hopkins, or at work in general, and we have to acknowledge the fact that there are some people that I work closely with—in my own experience—that I've had to rely a lot on, that honestly, if I had not been at work and I had not been in this environment that I would probably never associate myself with. But guess what, in those 23 years, these are the people that have some of these people that I relied on the most, and they've shown up for me in ways that I would probably never imagine. So, I think that there's some magic to that. So, I think that it's important as managers to be able to cultivate that kind of energy and that kind of relationship building in a way that can be successful. And I don't think that there are necessarily managers at the senior level that understand that piece.

Alexander Egginton: So, I know that you're not from Baltimore but, your church you said is in like the East Baltimore area, like how would you say—you already said that its reputation as an institution isn't great around there.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Horrible. So in other words, like when we look at vendors; like we're not supporting black businesses or businesses that are in the community, or one of the things that I thought was very interesting for me from my perspective is that, a couple of years ago, maybe three years ago, they had a freshmen seminar that students are required to do as a freshman that deals with like a couple of—two hours—where people talk about their experiences with other people that are different than themselves, what does that mean, their role, et cetera. And I was excited that there was some, a direction we were moving because I thought that we really needed to talk to students, because the students are the ones who are gonna then move on, because we don't expect that when you come in as a freshman. Our job is to make sure that you have enough experience that's broad enough that you are different than how you came in. I would hope that, that would be something that would be important, right?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: But, what I thought was interesting is that there are people that are on campus that have done this work for *years*, and they've done it on their own time. The things that I do outside is not, Hopkins doesn't pay me for that. I'm not rewarded for that; well, I'm rewarded for it because

it's a personal commitment. So, I go and I support programs, and I go and make myself available to students, but no one has ever asked me to do that, I've done it because it's important to *me*, and I think that there are a lot of other people that do that as well. So, it's interesting now when I hear the leadership talk about it. Sometimes I feel like it's not authentic, it's not sincere and that it's done because it's a check, as opposed to it being transformational in terms of the student experience, the staff experience and the Hopkins experience, which I think is very different.

Alexander Egginton: So, how is an institution like Hopkins go about; you look at, like a general consensus, especially like an educated and wealthy perspective of Hopkins in Baltimore and you say, like, "Oh, they're doing great things for like East Baltimore, they're building up homes and they're making it more affordable and all of that." How do they get that image when in reality they're not doing any of that?

Regine Laforest-Sharif: They're not, and I think honestly that President Daniels has probably been the one who is kind of, he's created that image—and he inherited a lot of that too. But even historically, Hopkins has not done right by even in terms of research. I mean

Alexander Egginton: [in agreement] I mean, Henrietta Lacks

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Come on, so we can keep ... so, it's not something, he inherited it, but I also think that when you go into those communities, you see properties that are being bought out by Hopkins. They're not just building Hopkins, just to build Hopkins; they're building and pushing people's families out. So, I think that there's ... the hospital has ... and I say that to you because I grew up in New York, and I grew up in places where, and I have friends there like for example, a Mount Sinai that's in the middle of Harlem, and you got those projects there. But to me, those folks are being able to be served by Mount Sinai very different than Hopkins serves the people that are around them. So, it is possible; it's just, you got to put your energy in what you're saying—you got to back up what you say. It does not make sense to me that you have people that live in that community, work at Hopkins and can't afford the healthcare for the institution that they are working for. I'm sorry, that's crazy.

Alexander Egginton: It's crazy.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: It's unacceptable at all levels.

Alexander Egginton: So, I guess one of my last questions, I thought it was really interesting when you said that you take your own time to kind of like do the things

that you think are important, you see a lot of other people doing that too.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Yes.

Alexander Egginton: And I'm just curious like what do you think Hopkins would have to do, at like an institutionalized level, to incorporate some of what like you're doing, some of what people are doing, to raise awareness and to really do the genuine and sincere community building type things. What can Hopkins do at the institutional level to make that start happening—to change? It's a really big question [inaudible 00:39:23] but you can take it on.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: That's a really big question, because I think that a part of it is the trust piece that I ... I think they will need to change the leadership, I'm gonna be honest with you. I think that the leadership now is one that has done well in terms of creating an illusion—it's not real. I think that there are some attempts; I'm not saying that there hadn't been some. But I even think that the motivation has been like, "Look at me, look what I've done" as opposed to, "This is the right thing to do." So, I don't know, I think that for me the first thing would be, the way that I see it is that ... sometimes when you want something different you got to get people in differently. That have a very different perspective, and I don't think that they've been able to do that as successfully and if they do get people, they leave—they leave. Because they, to me, I think that first of all, I think that there's a disconnect at a lot of different levels.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: I think that even when you want something to happen here, that it is very hard to funnel the same pattern, or the same template throughout Hopkins, and I think that part of it is Hopkins is very decentralized and they pride themselves on that. I think that there's been more of an effort since President Daniels came to do that whole "One Hopkins" piece. But I don't think that there's a consistent message that's hit. It's not—it's everybody can come in and I think that it's been very intentional because of things that are important to them that they want communicated, get communicated. You get what I'm saying?

Alexander Egginton: Yeah no, absolutely.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: It's just that's not that important. It might be important just to make it seem like it's important, or to get a really nice article that says that you are so civically minded and I say that because like the whole day of service ...

Alexander Egginton: The President's Day of Service

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Which I think is amazing because you have some people out there. But what happens after? How do you sustain that relationship? And have we been able to assess that? And I have to be honest with you, I think that the students at Hopkins do go out to the community; that is one thing that I can say, I think that Hopkins students absolutely. There's definitely that whole bubble at Hopkins but I also have, can tell you that I've sat where I've talked to students that they make time to—of their own for no reason—but to go out and do work in the community, and I've seen that.

Alexander Egginton: That's promising.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: So, to me it's not necessarily the students; it's definitely not the students because the other part of it too is, I think as our roles as administrators, is that it's our role to provide students with those experiences. And to pretty much guide them, or at least provide opportunities for them to have those kinds of experiences. So, if we want our students to be good citizens and be global citizens, then we have to provide those opportunities. But I do think that our students have done a good job. I think that when we give them those opportunities, they, they rock it—they do.

Alexander Egginton: Speaking from personal experience, like it might've been hard to find exactly what you're talking about, but now that I've found it, I've found incredible programs.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Absolutely.

Alexander Egginton: I'm doing that Hopkins Jail Tutorial Project,

Regine Laforest-Sharif: And that's an example right there.

Alexander Egginton: And I'm doing like From Prison to PhD program, that one of the professors here, is the, as the head of it, it's an amazing program. So, I know that they exist, it's just like we have to be motivated to find them.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: And Baltimore has programs. They do, they have amazing stuff that they do. There's a lot of good community stuff that happens in Baltimore, there is.

Alexander Egginton: And which gets no rep.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: None, zero, because everybody thinks that it's only very high crime, blah, blah. There's a lot of good stuff that happens in Baltimore, which is the reason honestly for me that I've chosen ... like I live in Howard county, my kid goes to school in Carroll county, but we do a lot in Baltimore, because for me, I don't want her to be disconnected. And there were decisions, there were reasons why we chose Howard county because my husband works in DC. So, we had to find a middle place. But, like I need to make sure that she gets it. And the only way that she gets it is through experiencing it.

Alexander Egginton: Thank you.

Regine Laforest-Sharif: You're welcome. Thank you.

Alexander Egginton: No problem

Regine Laforest-Sharif: Good job on your questions.