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Research Assistant Reflection

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University of Dayton

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Research Assistant Reflection

*Jalen Turner*¹

I've been at the University of Dayton for three years, coming from Milwaukee, where I had been majority of my life. Since being at UD I've



Jalen Turner

learned many valuable lessons about how our history impacts us. As a freshman, taking HST 150, I fell in love with the subject because of its rippling effects in time, such as the Atlantic slave trade that is still affecting its descendants today. In my time here I have experienced covert racism and implicit bias and am using my current education to explore more into why these acts are still occurring.

As a student researcher for the University, I've tried to keep an open mind about the past actions and stances the University has taken and not let my current biases influence my research. During the archive dive into the University's history of Black students and faculty, I learned more about how the student body used to react to injustices and have taken these stories with me. As a Black woman at the University, I feel a sense of responsibility to point out the wrongs and rights of the institution and give constructive feedback into what can be changed because as the most oppressed population in America, I believe that our perspectives are valuable.

¹ Jalen Turner is a junior history major, Class of 2022.

There were challenges in finding information pertaining to Black faculty and staff at the University, such as the first integration into the University's staff. Using methods I learned in my other history classes, I was able to find hints toward Black faculty integration and the first Black faculty member (1964). This experience has been the highlight of my time at UD because of the work I was able to do in helping the University reflect on its past. It is especially important to understand where we come from and who created the paths before us. If it wasn't for the Black students at UD who first attended and graduated, my graduating class of Black students could have been smaller.

As students who work on race at UD graduate, we should be mindful to continue their work so it will not get lost and forgotten about. It's also valuable information for faculty, staff and students at the University to know about, rather than the popular history of the Marianist institution. I hope to see the symposium re-created and continued and as common as the Stander symposium in the spring. The history of race at UD is important to identify and understand, especially as we move forward in a country that is learning to be anti-racist and anti-biased.