



## **Vivian Murrell**

*Corporate Administrative Assistant*

### **Q: Tell us about your role within your department. What do you love most about your job?**

**A:** In the course of my almost 29 years with HJ, I have worn many hats. Currently, I work as the front desk receptionist in the Hackl building (pre-pandemic), in addition to supporting our VP of Customer Experience Salena Scardina and Chief Marketing Officer Don King and his team. I love the variety that my job allows, and I have enjoyed the people I have had the opportunity to work with.

I would like to thank the Varsity/Herff Jones/BSN family for opening the door of diversity within our company. Thank you, Adam, for your leadership as you work to diversify and unify our company. Future leaders, whether they are in the political or corporate arena, have much to do to make sure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

### **Q: How many years have you been with HJ?**

**A:** February 11 will be my 29<sup>th</sup> year.

### **Q: What does Black History Month mean to you?**

**A:** My family and I choose to celebrate black history not just in the month of February, but throughout the year. It gives our community the opportunity to pay homage and respect to our forefathers and foremothers who paved the way for future generations. My hope is that our rich heritage will someday be celebrated by ALL people, regardless of race or creed.

### **Q: Is there an activity that you do with your family/friends to celebrate Black History Month? And why do you choose this particular activity?**

**A:** When my son and daughter were young, my husband and I instilled a love of reading and the arts. Each year, the Indianapolis Public Library's Center for Black Literature and Culture sponsors a Meet the Artists event, which gives the community an opportunity to view the works of prominent local African American artists, musicians and authors. This has been a family tradition for over 25 years, and now we are bringing the grandbabies into the fold!

In June, we celebrate Juneteenth with a friends and family gathering and lots of wonderful soul food and good music!

### **Q: Tell us about a moment in Black History that has influenced your career/life. What about that moment sticks with you?**

**A:** My parents were my mentors. Like many African Americans during the 1930s-1940s, they were born and raised in the rural south (Lafayette, AL) and worked as sharecroppers at a very early age. Both

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had only 3<sup>rd</sup> grade educations, and they were determined that all five of their children would be educated and enjoy a better life. When they moved here from Alabama, my mom worked for many years as a nanny and my dad was a skilled tradesman. Together, they worked to make sure we had the best life they could afford – which didn't necessarily mean material things. My family didn't have much growing up, but my parents made sure we had what we needed most – lots of love and a foundation of faith.

With that said, I'm so grateful that my parents lived to see President Barack Obama become our first black President. My mother told me and my daughter that his inauguration was the vision that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. mentioned in his 'I Have a Dream' speech – she and my dad were so proud!

We as a people have come this far by faith. We are proud, resilient and we have persevered even in persecution. Our culture is rich, and we are a blessed people. We are seeing the fruits of the labor of our ancestors as people of color rise to become president, vice president, senators, congressmen, doctors, scientists, and the list goes on. My 5-year-old granddaughter, who is somewhat of an 'old soul,' is fascinated with Madame Vice President Kamala Harris, and I'm so grateful that she and other little girls -- and boys -- are able to witness the dawn of a new day for black and brown women!

**Q: What is your favorite quote or mantra and why?**

**A:** I have so many favorites. After such a tumultuous year, I love the song "Feeling Good" by Nina Simone. The song talks about a new dawn, a new day and a new life. My favorite scripture is Jeremiah 29:11, because it speaks of God's promise to us; it lets us know that He is in control and He has great things in store for us.



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