[MUSIC] You are listening to tell me our story and reconnect to HLS staff on a personal level.

Hello, everyone. This is Edgar Kley Filho from HLS Human Resources Department. My pronouns are he, him, his. Today, we are talking to Shanell Lavery from PLAP, who will tell us about her life, how long she is in this position at HLS, and the work she does. Thank you for joining us Shanell and please, tell me your story.

Thank you so much for having me, Edgar.

It's my pleasure. I'm really happy that you are here. Could you tell us a little bit about your family history background, if you are from New England or any other place where your family's from?

I'm from New England.

New England?

I'm from New England. I grew up in Rhode Island, so not far from here. I still live in Rhode Island.

Yes?

Yes.

You commute every day?

I commute. Yes.

It's like a two hour more or less?

It depends on the day, and it depends on what time I leave, but it could be up to two hours each way.

But it is a good place where you are?

I love living in Rhode Island.

Is Rhode Island, Connecticut, when I stop when you drive down New York. Maybe Connecticut.

That's Connecticut.

When you take 84 that's really deep. [OVERLAPPING] It's not very different than our traffic here, but where you live is more calmer or different side.

I guess it's a little calmer. Rhode Island is the smallest state, so already, it's very small. Everything is 20 minutes away. But I love it because I'm near the water, so I get to see the ocean every single day.

My God that's amazing.

The water makes me really happy.

There we go. [LAUGHTER] Talking about water because I think about my zodiac sign with spices and water. Which one is yours?

I'm a virgo.

Is not what is air or.

No, it's Earth.

Earth, of course.

Yes. Earth.

Of course, I had to be on Earth. [LAUGHTER] Mine is water. The other one is okay.

Yes.

Tell me more. Your family was always from Rhode Island, your entire family or just you are living there now?

No. My mother's side of the family is from the South. My grandmother, who is the one that moved to Rhode Island. She was from Mississippi.

Mississippi?

Yeah. She lived there for a long time and moved to Rhode Island after getting married and starting her family.

That's nice. How big is your family if you can share?

I guess it's a pretty big family, but now we're very small. My grandmother was the matriarch of the family, so she was the glue that held us all together.

Yes. It's always like that.

She died in 2010, and so since then, we've all been in our own little worlds. [LAUGHTER] It's rare that we all get together now.

If you remember, if you know how many from your grandmother's side her siblings.

Her siblings. I think she had seven or eight siblings.

The reason I'm asking is because my mom's side were nine. My dad's sides also nine. Dad was, I think, two women and seven boys. Mom's side, I think, were five women and four boys.

Wow.

Big number.

Big.

But same story that you are saying. My mom is still alive. Dad passed away 2005. But they were the ones who kept our entire family together.

Exactly.

There was something that they were used to or the way that they were raised, whatever it was. Now I feel like even if I consider no my siblings, I am living here. Two are living in the same town where my mom lives. Another one, the baby one is living in the South. You meet once in a while when I go back to Brazil, tend to meet. But other than that, it's not the same anymore. You don't get together. Mom's houses when I was in Brazil, used to have for Sundays, sometimes Saturdays, and depends on what it was, my God, 35, 50 people in the house having lunch and drinking and whatever, and now you're telling the same story.

It's very interesting. My grandmother has five kids, including my mom. All of the kids, the cousins, the uncles, aunts get together either for Sunday dinner or for holidays. But it's just not the same anymore. Also, I still have a lot of family that lives in the South that lives in Mississippi. We would go to Mississippi at least once or twice a year growing up. But then, as an adult, I don't go there. I don't really get to see that side of my family often.

Look like a lose connection?

Yeah.

What do you think it is?

I think well because she was the connection for me because the family in Mississippi is all of her siblings and everybody that she was close to. Without her being there to facilitate that those meetings, they just don't really happen.

It feels like it connection doesn't happen anymore. She was the only one from Mississippi from her side of the family, Mississippi that came to New England as far as you know.

Well, actually, no, there were a couple of her sisters also came to New England, but to different places.

What do you remember of your childhood being with your grandma?

Well, my grandmother was a really important part of my childhood. I lived mostly with her growing up. It was a different time. [LAUGHTER] I'm a child of the '80s and '90s, and so I had a time when we would spend more time outside and a lot more independence. My grandmother was a school teacher, so education was really important to her.

Nice.

I always thankful for her because I went to the best schools that we could get to. I also played the piano. I did a bunch of different extracurricular activities. I remember having a good time as a kid. [LAUGHTER]

Food?

Yes, the best food.

Difference between the food that you know around New England from the food that she would cook from memories of Mississippi?

I guess because she cooked a lot of Creole food. She went to college in New Orleans and saw a lot of Creole cooking or store food.

Really?

Yeah. Her gumbo was the best. Her sweet potato pie was also the best.

Wow.

Yes. Nothing could replicate her cooking. I try.

Did she ever tell you about going to college, because for me, going to college in New Orleans that might be fun?

[LAUGHTER] I can only imagine.

Because going to college is one thing. But I think going to college in New Orleans is a different story because it's such a cultural center and totally different from everything else.

It is.

Oh my God.

I didn't really hear a lot of stories about college. No.

[LAUGHTER] Grandma how was that? [LAUGHTER] No. [LAUGHTER] Let's keep folks on the other talks here. [LAUGHTER] You said that you went to schools in Rhode Island based on influence of your own mother and everything. How was the school for you? Going to school? Well, let me backtrack a little bit. Because you mentioned something that's very common for me as well, and I mentioned, I think, in other conversations. Being a child of the '80s, the independence, doing things, of course, you have to remind everyone that completely different story from what you are living right now.

Yes.

It feels that's not too far back. But the difference in terms of communications or whatever you have now is such a different life, isn't it?

Yes, very different.

Because just the phones. Well, the phones, cell phone. [LAUGHTER] Then the social media that you didn't have. Everything was just journals and everything else. I remember growing up, being a kid and going everywhere you wanted to play with friends, with neighbors and everything else. When cousins would come, we would run or bike somewhere. I remember mum saying we used to come home from school. I used to when I was a kid, going to school in the morning, around 12:00, I would be home already. We'd have lunch, do my homework for us. Otherwise, I wouldn't get out of the house. Then after that, I would say, can I go play with my friends? She said, yeah. But be here before sundown or 6:00 PM or something. That's one thing, and my God, you went to place I keep thinking, if I had a child today, I said, no, you are not. [LAUGHTER]

Well, I have children today and it is not like that. [LAUGHTER]

Isn't that something?

It's not like that at all. No.

Because you had such a freedom, or they trust us a lot or they said, I don't want these kids to give me a hard time here you had all afternoon so go.

I think it was a bunch of different things because I talk to people about it now, and I think for starters a lot of parents worked and there wasn't the flexibility that we have now where you can work from home. I think with a lot of parents working, kids had to step up and get themselves home from school, sometimes make their own dinner.

That's true.

I think that's part of it. I also think maybe it was the community because I think there was more of a trust. Because it was in the summer time, you have your breakfast, you go, you leave. I would go and I would come home when it was time to eat dinner. I think maybe that was the other part of it was that there was more of a community, and you knew that your neighbors and your friends parents were looking out for you.

Most of the place that I lived in my childhood were small towns as well. Community and security safety would be out there, so I don't know. I remember going to creeks and playing in the creeks and my God, how were we? That was okay. Too far from home, miles from home in those creeks of just having fun. Then coming back, everything was fine. No problem. Once you don't get in trouble, at least you are okay. Then of course, the cell phones, I keep thinking about high school, meeting friends. It's something that's hard to imagine that you did or what you did, and it was never a problem. I don't know. Maybe in one way, today it's easier for you to just text someone or here's my location or whatever. You're going to meet, I'm here at that time.

No.

You could send a letter via mail. [LAUGHTER] Can we meet? I'll be there, but not I'm here, but it was interesting.

I think of my kids now, so I have a 10-year-old, and so for the first time, [LAUGHTER] he walked to school with a friend a couple of weeks ago. In order for them to get that plan, the friend face timed him in the morning so that they could chat about what they were wearing and what time they would be ready.

That's so cool.

Then the friend would tell us, okay, I'm walking over to your house now. With us, there was no planning. It was just I go knock at my friend's door and hopefully they're home or they're not home, [LAUGHTER] so I don't know.

I remember friends saying, you're going to have a game or training this day at this time. I stopped by your house to pick you up at this time. Say, okay, that's the only way. Then you would be waiting.

Exactly.

If they would pass or not. If they did, then I don't know, you have no way to call. I called at home and you scare someone saying, they're supposed to pick me up, where are they? They say, they left I don't know. [LAUGHTER] It's interesting to think about all this, but it was such a cool time as well, music and everything.

It was a good time.

Wow, anyways. Brought me back in time there. [LAUGHTER] Now is schools. How was kindergarten all the way? For example, K to 12 and then after going to college, what's your memory? Good, bad, bullying, what's these stories that stick to your mind?

I have fairly good memories about school. For elementary school, I went to a Catholic school. It was Catholic school in the neighborhood that all of my uncles and aunts, my mum.

Everybody went there.

All went to the same school, so I went to that school. Then for middle school, I went to a private prep school. That had probably the most significant impact on my education because it was for starters it was a really good school. But their mission was all about making quality education accessible. It was in a neighborhood a low income, a typically low income neighborhood where the school was located, which was where I lived. But they had students from all over the state coming in. It was extremely diverse, economically diverse, ethnically diverse. I just remember I learned a lot during that time, but I also made very significant friendships. That gave me the building blocks for everything else that came afterwards. For high school, I went to a boarding school in Connecticut. Again, very good education similar in that it was relatively diverse, not quite as diverse as my middle school.

Not as diverse the first one.

My high school experience. Now for starters, when you go to boarding school, it's you live there. [LAUGHTER] It's like a sleep over every night in ways. It was a lot of fun, but it also taught me a lot about responsibility because I had to do my own laundry. I had to manage my own schedule. I had to make sure that I got my homework done. There was nobody there looking over your shoulder to make sure you got it done. I learned a lot about time management and organizing and keeping my room clean and all these different things. When I went beyond high school, I had, I think a lot more tools than a lot of other people had. [LAUGHTER]

That's what I was going to ask you because it sounds like a college without the freedom.

Exactly.

It's a lot like college without the freedom, without the partying. [LAUGHTER]

Exactly, the alcohol and everything because you cannot actually.

But it is, it's a lot of responsibility because you're expected to do your classes. But you're expected to play sports. I played a few different sports in high school. You also have extra curricular activities. I was in a lot of different singing groups because music is my thing. I was in three or four different singing groups. That was also part of the things that I had on my list. When I went to college, it wasn't as much of a culture shock for me because I already knew how to manage my time. How to do my own laundry, how to cook my own food. I was very independent. For me, college, the only other difference was managing the social part of college and obviously the academics, but I'm really grateful.

That's really interesting. I have to go by steps here because the middle school and you said that you went to a place that was very diverse economically in many different ways as well. That was always a good environment, a good relationship in general, connection in general, a good place.

It was a very good place. I'm still connected to a lot of other people from middle school, my best friend that I have been friends with for over 25 years we met in middle school.

Wow.

It was a really positive experience. It was also a very small school, too. In my class from fourth grade to eighth grade, I think we never had more than 20 kids in a class.

That's very organized.

It was very tailored learning small classrooms. It was a really positive.

This is the private one?

This is a private school.

Then in high school, you go to the boarding school?

Yeah.

Which is a little different in the experience in terms of diversity?

Yeah.

But it still was a reasonable place for you to feel included and be part of the community and learn what you need to learn because they offered a teaching skills for everybody the same way?

Yeah. It was definitely positive in that way. I will say, when it comes to boarding school, it's diverse, but not. [LAUGHTER]

Then he started a little bit of the groups?

Yes. I wouldn't say that the groups were necessarily racially separated by any means. But at the same time in my freshman year, I think there were four girls of color compared to the rest of the class.

How big was the class?

I think it was 50 people because again, I had a very small school. I think out of 50 girls, there probably were four girls of color, and so I wouldn't call it bullying, but I definitely had some issues with people not understanding differences, like some girls that had only grown up in small towns, Connecticut, them encountering somebody that lived in low income neighborhood, where I lived. There were definitely some differences, but nothing that I felt uncomfortable managing. I have always been the type of person that, I like to speak up. I like to educate people so that they know, you can't say that, but you can say this. There were some times when I had to educate people, like it's not okay to call somebody ghetto. That's not okay. Maybe you could try saying this instead.

But that's different. If I hear it correct or you correct me if I understand this wrong. It gives a sense that were not intentionally things said with the intention to hurt or harm someone was really by ignorance because I said, they didn't have the experience because they were from small towns, probably predominantly white, in the way that it is. What I'm trying to say is not trying to cover up for anything in terms of the reality of a certain places or certain people that weren't mean because they are. But at least giving a chance you said, if people can learn about mistakes or the way that they perceive things, it shows a lot of room for good relationships there in someone having a better sense of ah, because sometimes it is, like you said, and I'm saying this now being from Brazil, being an immigrant, our culture is a different story. The way that and I'm speaking for myself here, not for the entire country, because as in the US, you have so many different regions, so many different cultures part of that. I'm talking more in terms of where I was raised and a family that I had the cultural aspect of that one. But sometimes speaking loud, if you sit down, I don't know if most of Brazils now, but the ones that I know, you sit down with them, they're going to tell their entire lives [LAUGHTER] in a seating, and they don't care if it should be private or not. They're just going to, okay, you ask that question. You want to know the whole history. Here you go. For certain people that can be shocking saying, I didn't need to know all that but for us…to go back to your point as you like to educate people if they are honestly interested to learn, it's nice to know that there is still people who want to learn, and does not always intentionally. It feels like it was a good experience.

It was a good experience, and I think exactly what you said, there are people that want to learn. I think, especially fellow students, I found that for the most part, it was just ignorance where they don't know any better. Obviously, adults are different story.

Yes.

Because they've already established [LAUGHTER] their beliefs. But for me, it was a great experience. Again I credit a lot of where I am now to that experience that I had then because it helped me to be really independent, really resilient, learn how to juggle a whole bunch of different things at the same time. A lot of the people that I met then, I'm still friends with now.

It is really cool.

Yeah.

One thing that I like about the programs that you learn from is exactly that guidance that sometimes parents nowadays don't have time or patients sometimes for anything. But if you have a community school, a program that can teach those kind of responsibilities, some sort of discipline without being too strict in discipline, makes a huge difference in someone's life going, you know. The same thing that you were saying, I think you learned a lot of the skills in your high school program. Well, aside with the middle school, but the high school program as well, that would be awesome for your college experience later. It would be so strange for someone who go there. Certain examples that I heard, do I need to clean my room?

Exactly. Yes. [LAUGHTER]

Nobody does that for me. It's like, yes, now you have to clean your room. We can clean the hallways and everything else. You leave that and go to college. How was college?

College is where it gets interesting. [LAUGHTER]

That's what I'm waiting for.

I went to boarding school in Connecticut. For college, I went to Northeastern in Boston. I was a nursing student at Northeastern, which was really a great experience. I really liked college. But also had a lot of family things happening at the same time. I've always had a lot of family things happening in the background of my education, and so for college, I spent, I think, about two, 2.5 years at Northeastern, and then I actually left college to move back home. A very long story, short. I moved back home, and ultimately, I ended up becoming the guardian of my siblings who were teenagers at the time. I was 20, 21-years-old, and they at the time, were 14 and 15-years-old, but I ended up taking on custody of them and having to go from young college partier, nursing student to now all of a sudden, I have responsibilities, and I had to get a full time job. I had to get an apartment, and so it took me a very long time after I left Northeastern to finally get back to college, which is why I said, it's a very long story.

But you end up going back?

But I did eventually go back, yeah.

If you can say anything, how did that feel to leave college and take another responsibility of taking care of all of them?

To be honest with you, I don't know. [LAUGHTER] I guess if you can't tell, I'm a very easy going person, and I am also very quick to just, this is what I've been handed. Let me figure it out. I don't think I really stopped to think about it because I am more like solutions oriented. I just got things done. I think now decades later, I can sit back and I can think, wow, that was a lot, I did that. But at the time, there was really no thought. Obviously in the back of my mind, I wanted to be in college, and I wanted to finish college. Yes.

But at the same time, my responsibilities now are making sure these kids get to school and have clothes to wear and food to eat, and so that's what I focused on, especially for the first couple of years.

How long when you stopped with the college until you went back?

I stopped college. That was probably 2004-ish. I did not go back to college until 2010.

Six years. Your siblings would be probably already either high school or going to college as well? How was going back to college? That changed anything? With all this responsibility.

It was different. The way that I got back to college. I was working a job because we were living in Rhode Island. I was working a job in Rhode Island that had well, I guess it was medical in nature. It had something to do with what I was going to school for. I worked in sterile reprocessing, which is the people that sterilize instruments surgery. That was my full time job is I was sterilizing instruments used for surgery, which was great for me because I still got to use some of the skills that I had, like learning names of instruments and the science stuff that I really liked. But as many people can probably understand, when you leave college, if you have a balance at college or if you have student loans, oftentimes before they will give you access to your transcripts, you have to pay off that balance. Part of why I was working, not only was to keep our household afloat, but it was also so that I could pay off my balance at school so that I could get my transcripts and go back.

For the years that we studied and until you could start over again.

The way that I ended up doing that is I like to research things, and I found out that if you work at a college or at a university, oftentimes, there are benefits that will allow you to go to school for either a really low cost or there's tuition reimbursement and all these different things. My goal at that time was to find a job where I could go back to school and somebody else would pay for it. That got me to a position at MIT, where I worked for a couple of years. Then eventually to Harvard. I'm sure, as you know, when you work at Harvard, you can take classes at the extension. $40 a class. Once I got to Harvard, I was,yes, I made it. I get to go back to school.

You got back to school here?

That's how I got back to school here is I went to the extension.

Wonderful.

Then you graduate from the extension school? But it's still in the nursing programs in nursing.

I think once I finally got back to school, I was just grateful to be back. Honestly, I didn't know what I wanted to do anyway. Once I left nursing school, I was, I don't really know what I want to do. My goal was to just get a college degree. I got a liberal arts degree with a concentration in psychology, so that I could then figure out what the heck I wanted to do.

Do you think from your first intention to go to college in nursing school? Finishing your degree here at Harvard in Liberal Arts and course that you took. Do you regret nursing, not finishing nursing? Was that your call or you are totally fine now with what you decided? What do you have?

I am totally fine with what I ultimately decided. I think there is a part of me, if I had never left school, I would have become a nurse. That would have been great. I think. I went into nursing specifically because I have always wanted to, I know this sounds corny, but I've always wanted to help people. Becoming a doctor was not in the card for me because I just did not want to go to school for that long. Nursing to me, felt like I could have that impact with their medical part of their chart. But also I could have that impact when it comes to just being with people. I've always been a people person. I've always wanted to be a person to hold somebody's hand and help them through something, navigate something. That's why I went that route, but ultimately, I'm okay with where I am. I don't regret it.

The reason I'm asking is because sometimes I don't know if everybody is, but sometimes I feel, if makes sense or not. For example, you had a plan and you went for that plan. You went to college with that intention with that, go in mind. Life changed and bring you to a different direction. That sometimes is stronger than you, that is nothing that you can do. You have to go. Like it happened to you. Then you have a pause. Then you go for a complete different because of the circumstance, whatever it is. But then you don't feel as much, you deviated from that go. Is just the interest is not an idea. I have a goal at that time at that age, and that thought process that you had. Then life changed then you say, okay I'm here now. Sometimes maybe was not, I don't know what it is, I just tried to fly in this idea that sometimes changes happen because that was the curve that needs to grow and end up. In the process. Where you are is a proof of your main goal is because you're saying, sorry, I'm analyzing too much.

That was okay.

But you went to nursing school because you want to help people. You left nursing school to help people. I'm saying people here are your siblings. But you cared for them. You took care of them for them to move on with their lives and have a chance as well. You did. What your main goal is to help people that not necessarily. I think it's so interesting how you went to practice, helping people in your life. You mentioned that you had a job, an experience at MIT. How was that job?

I loved it. MIT I worked in the careers office at MIT, and so I worked with students.

Career services?

Yep. I worked with students applying to medical school. I know. Exactly.

What?

There are so many students at MIT applying to medical school. But I managed what's called the credential service. Now, mind you, this is a while ago. It probably works a lot different now. But then when I worked there, your medical school applications, you were actually printing out everything and mailing it.

Still printing out.

My job was to basically, a medical school application has tons of different things that you have to put together. Your high school transcripts and your MCA scores and your recommendations and all that stuff. My job was helping students applying, track all of the different items and collecting all of those items for them, and then eventually sending it off to all of the college schools that they were applying to.

All of that print out. But hold on. That's not too far ago, about ten years, maybe?

I started there in 2008.

Isn't that amazing, and we still printing everything? Now everything is mainly online.

Now everything is online. Yeah.

Yeah. Because it sounds like we want to talk like this. We're still talking the 80s.

Yeah, I know.

Definitely very much. But this is not that long ago.

Not that long ago. Yeah.

Interesting.

Yeah.

Then after that, what was the change that you left MIT to come to Harvard?

To be honest with you the only reason really that I left MIT for Harvard was because of the benefit of being able to go to the benefit school for $40.00.

Which is fair and it's very well thought through because if you can take a defense of the program that the benefits that they offer, why not because it can be very improved helpful.

Yeah.

Then we started here, how did you get, which job you got at? It was the one that you have already?

No. I came to Harvard in 2010 and I was at the medical school, so I worked for the Neuro Discovery Center.

What is this thing with you that you end up always being around the medical?

No. I don't know, and so the center which I'm not to be honest with you I'm not sure if it's still around, but they did research on neurodegenerative diseases, like MS, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and so I was the administrative coordinator and so I did a whole bunch of different things, but event planning and help with grant applications, all stuff, but it was a lot of fun and it was my way to get to Harvard.

Wow, and then you stayed there until?

I was at the Neuro Discovery Center for about over six years. I got married while I was there. I had both of my kids while I was there and then when I had my second child, I decided that I really wanted to live closer to I mean, work closer to home because I was still in Rhode Island. Now, mind you I had bounced around during the time and I had lived in various places in Massachusetts, but when we had our kids we decided to move back to Rhode Island, and I left that job because I wanted to see what it was like to work and live close to each other. Because having two kids and juggling like I was still driving, I had a long commute. I was taking classes for some of that time, so it was just managing a lot, so I decide leaving Harvard would be my opportunity for starters see what else is out there after being at Harvard for at that point six years but also to get closer to home.

Then?

I ended up from there. I worked for a public school district in HR which was drastically different than everything I had done. I don't even know why they hired me to be honest because I had no experience in HR, but they took a chance on me and so I worked there. I was there for about a year and a half and basically I was working to recruit teachers to this public school district. A huge learning experience. I enjoyed the work that I was doing, but it was also just a lot. It was a very big district, lots of open positions constantly and so from there I decided, I think I want to go back to work at Harvard and so I ended up at the Law School.

You apply for a position the one that you have?

Yeah.

Right now, what's your position and you work for PLAP?

Yeah.

Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Yes. I am program manager of PLAP which is the Prison Legal Assistance Project, and PLAP is an SPO, a student practice organization. Our students get to have clients. They get to do legal work as early as their first year in law school. PLAP takes on a bunch of different types of cases, but we mostly do disciplinary hearings and parole hearings and so the people that are calling us prison legal assistance project we are helping people that are in prison, so we mostly work with people within the Massachusetts State prisons, but we also get letters and calls from all around the country. The types of cases that we take on have happened after their criminal proceeding, like after that process and you're in prison, you're already incarcerated and so we deal more with internal things that come about, but we have lots and lots of student members.

Yeah.

We have a few supervising attorneys, and in my opinion I think we are doing really good work because we give a voice to those who don't generally have a voice, so often times I think once you are in prison you are just like signed off, like you're over there. We don't have to think about you and so we offer a hotline where people can call us and ask for different types of help on different types of matters. We also receive lots and lots of mail from Massachusetts and all around the country, and then most importantly we take on cases and so we probably take on about 100 cases per year.

100 cases?

Yeah.

Wow. Do students have a chance to really hands on experience there?

Yeah.

They have their supervisor that are going to be with them, but in such the case, they can try the case. Again, if you necessarily bring to a new trial, I don't know how the process is going.

No, there aren't really trials, so because it's all internal stuff. A disciplinary hearing as an example. A disciplinary hearing comes about you're in prison and you get in trouble for something.

Yeah.

You have contraband or there was a fight that happened, and so when you get that report, we receive that report and then our students have the ability to pick and choose if they want to take on the case, and so they are going into prison to meet with their client regularly. They're also gathering up evidence, so sometimes they're going on their discovery visits to go watch videos of whatever evidence there may be or to read through things and then eventually they are doing the hearing that happens in the prison, so it's a little bit different than what you think of when you think of a typical trial or case because it's not in a court room. It's all internal happening within the prison.

Would be a conversation with the administration, the prison administration?

Exactly. They have a disciplinary officer. There's a hearing officer, and I would be with the prison officials.

Interesting.

Yeah.

Wow.

They do get to essentially practice law because they have a case, they have clients, they have they're writing motions. They are cross examining people, sometimes working on an appeal. To me, it's a really good way to take what you're learning in your classroom work and put it out into the real world. Based on what you're saying, you have connection with the students, you talk to the students as well. You have connection with the faculty because some of them.

Not really.

Not as many.

No, not really.

The supervisors are what? Lawyers that work.

Clinical instructors.

Clinical instructors that work here and support the student work that they do?

Yeah.

For how long right now you are doing this?

Almost seven years.

Seven years in blap.

Yeah Wow. That's wonderful.

You probably have seen so many amazing stories and have seen some of your in students that you have passed through going through different places and doing their job, because I believe I'm saying that because when I used to be in the US and have a lot of a connection with the students. I still have some of them still on my Facebook or, it is really nice to see where they go. Come here for a period of time. Some of them start, like, of course, the first year is the nightmare of all of them.

Yes.

I used to joke with them a lot by the end of the first year. Next year is the second, 2Ls, because it's a transition to the easiness of a third year in graduation. They come all panicking. What I'm going to do, my God, the skies are falling. What should I do? Then the second, they are already relaxed. The third, who cares? I'm done here. But it is beautiful to see the academic part in the first year. Then when they start going to clinics and clinicals and journals to get more involved and had a little bit more relaxed time to be able to enjoy their relationships here. To then on the 3rd year to be ready to go, but still having a feeling that it's too soon. Three years pass really quick. It's nice to see all that process and see where they are going to end up working or doing this thing is beautiful. Curiosity, if you can say anything. How are your siblings now?

My siblings are good now. They are both married with kids.

Married with kids?

Yes.

They're good.

That's really cool.

You did a good job.

I hope so. [LAUGHTER] I did okay. I did okay with the tools that I had.

No, you did. You took care of people. You took care of your loved ones. But it is a part of your life that you invested and you have a stronger connection there. It's nice to see also them growing up and having kids. Now, you still gather together when you have a chance or everyone is far from each other.

We're not necessarily far. The furthest is New York, but we have not gathered with like all of the kids and us together. We need to do that on the list.

Well, that's the same with us when I go back to Brazil because now I just go once a year. Even there with whatever it is, some of them live closer, but it is always hard, there is that change. We need Grandma back to make that glue. Overall, Harvard Law School. Good thing. Good experience. I feel like everything is what you are expecting in terms of working compared.

Yes. Definitely a good experience.

Yes.

I love working with students. I think it makes the work so much more fun when you get to interact with students.

Yes.

I think, like you said earlier, it's fun being able to see these cycles because now I've been through a few cycles of that I met.

Yes. One year and then I see them all the way up until they graduate.

There's many of them that I'm still in touch with, and it's nice to be have some impact on their education, even if it's just a little impact. But also just to see, all the amazing things that they do while they're here and what they accomplish after they leave.

Your relationship with them is good?

Yeah.

That's the difference. When you have someone that can be there, they feel that they can trust and connect and receive some. But I always feel like they always need support and they always need.

I agree. I think for starters, Harvard Law School is just, like you said, it's a very big name. It is very intimidating. I feel like part of why I'm here is that, obviously, I'm no attorney. I'm no background. But I think part of why I'm here and why I like what I do is that I get to bring the non legal side. I want to bring real world part of all of it.

Yes, the connection.

Working with students, obviously doing the work that we do, there's a lot of training that goes into learning how to properly communicate on the phone with somebody that's having a difficult time or whatever it may be. We're talking about that stuff. But I think I also like being here because I just want to be an example of a regular persons. A professional person that's also open to talk to you if you're having a hard time. I've actually had some students that don't want to be lawyers.

Change, right!

They're like, I don't really want to be an attorney. Can we talk? I love being able to be there for students in a way that they're not going to have a professor. A professor is not going to tell you, like, you should totally go be a teacher. They're not going to tell you to teach elementary school. They're going to tell you to whatever. I like being able to just be a real world example for people.

You touch on something when you talk about I'm not a lawyer. Like I said, I'm not a lawyer, either. But I think that's what makes a difference. Whoever is going to teach them about law, faculty, and a lot of these directors or assistant deans and deans. Majority of them are all legal grounds. They are all lawyers and everything else. They have all these people to answer questions about laws. What I think sometimes lack and that's why we regular people come in. Is the connection, the human connection that they need. Otherwise, they are going to live in this law world that can be very, for me sounds cold because I don't like law and gender. [LAUGHTER] I don't understand anything, what they're saying. But sometimes depends on how they connect and talk. Sometimes we have Tuesdays at ten or the courses that faculty. When they come down and bring to a level that you can relate, then feels different, but they really has to come down. Popular way to say this without the articles and paragraphs. Here is what. I think it shouldn't need this human connection. It needs to be who's that? That's what makes my imposter syndrome slower, like I become smaller. Because you always ask questions yourself really what you are doing here and how you are. But then you remind a they need human beings here too that can be talking about common things and see the possibilities that everybody has and everything. Shanell, I think that's it. We talked for a little bit. We talked a lot. Thank you very much.

Yes. Thank you.

For accepting to participate. I'm really happy that you came and told your story was lovely just chatting. It was not that bad, was it?

No, not bad at all.

Yes. Anything you didn't even have time to talk badly about.

I know.

Our friend.

Yes.

Invitation, Mark. Heather Williams. But if you have another portion, you're going to say at a lot of things. That's the best part of it. Thank you very much.

Thank you so much, I appreciate it.

For everybody listening, we talk soon, until next time. Bye bye.[MUSIC]

Nice.

That was easy.[MUSIC]