



***What would you like to tell us about your heritage?***

I grew up in the throes of the civil rights movement, just before the Kennedy assassination. I was unaware of the impact these events had on my culture as a child, but I remember the funeral and the impact it had on my parents. As I grew older, I began to understand there were differences between people. I went to a Black Pentecostal church but lived in a diverse neighborhood with mostly white people. We got along with everyone and went to the same schools together. Even as the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War were raging, there was very little conflict between us. There were, however, issues between my classmates and me when Richard Nixon was running for president. I realized we were very far apart in our beliefs. Most of my classmates moved away from the neighborhood, but some stayed, even through high school.



Me in my junior year of high school.

In my teen years, I learned that the color of my skin and the way I thought about life shouldn't keep me from being kind, loving my neighbor, and living in this America. Yes, I have experienced racism and felt the sting of being rejected because of my skin color, but I'm still here. I have lived in Reno all my life and have seen the changes time, money, and different administrations bring. It's not been all bad, but in my lifetime I hope to see better days ahead.



Me today.

***What is a source of pride for you in your heritage?***

I am thankful and proud that my people are resilient and we are still here.

***What do you wish more people knew about your heritage?***

That African Americans are Americans. We helped build this country from its beginnings, we are a part of its history, and that we matter as much as all peoples that have set foot on this soil since before George Washington was president.

