

## Small Town Girl Now Working At The Pentagon

“Just because you are from or live in a small town, this does not mean your chances and options are limited,” advises Brishauna J. Hawkins-Wesson. A native of Lawrenceville and graduate of Southside Virginia Community College, this small town girl now works as a Temporary Hire for the U.S. Department of Army Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management at Headquarters, U.S. Pentagon, in Arlington, Virginia.

Hawkins-Wesson graduated from Brunswick High School in 2014 as number 6 in the top ten percentile of her class. Having tried but not gotten a spot in the prestigious Governor’s School of Southside Virginia, she enrolled in dual enrollment courses as well as classes on her own at SVCC in order to complete her Associates of Arts and Science degree in General Studies with a specialization in Administration of Justice the same year as her high school graduation.

Having many credits to transfer to her four-year college of choice, she completed a Bachelor of Science degree at James Madison University in two years. Hawkins-Wesson received the B.S. in Public Policy and Administration with a concentration in Public Management and a minor in Political Science in May 2016.

An added bonus was serving the state of Virginia and Virginia’s 5th Congressional District by interning for U.S. Representative Robert Hurst and U.S. Senator Mark Warner from May to August of 2015.

About her experience at SVCC, she said, “First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the late Mrs. Rosa Hawkins (former dual enrollment Coordinator) for her dedication and service in shaping and molding the dual enrollment program, as well as serving as a mentor to the students within the SVCC community. Her encouragement and spiritual wisdom carried me through this program and made my SVCC experience the greatest. In addition, I would like to thank Professors: Lisa Jordan, Teresa Hudson, Shanley Dorin, and Mary Downing-Gardner for shaping and molding me to become a better learner and student.”

She also encourages students to “seize every opportunity that is provided or available for you and persevere and stay focused on achieving your goals.”

Both of her parents are Brunswick County natives. Her mother, Rachelle Hawkins-Wesson, is a popular educator and We The People coordinator for Brunswick County Public Schools and her father, Terrence Wesson, is SGT First Class in the U.S. Army and human resource specialist with the U.S. Department of Justice.

Setting and meeting goals is in Hawkins-Wesson's DNA. Her future plans include receiving a Master's in Homeland Security and Emergency Management or Security Studies at a well accredited and qualified institution of higher learning within the next two years. Within the next four years she plans to be proficient in Arabic and to obtain graduate certificates in Islamic or Middle Eastern Studies and possibly cyber security. She hopes to work for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in the future also.