



An Interview with Leon Harris, Research Associate and Doctoral Candidate...

When did you join the Begun Center and what is your current role with us?

My tenure at the Center began nearly nine years ago as a graduate assistant in the Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence (ISPV) at Kent State University. I had the opportunity to make the transition, along with other ISPV faculty and staff, to Case Western Reserve University in 2011. Through my work on various projects, particularly, My Commitment, My Community, Police Assisted Referral and the Family and Children First Council Evaluation, I was promoted to Research Associate in 2016.

In addition to working at the Begun Center, you're also a Mandel School PhD Candidate. How's that going?

In addition to my role as a FT Research Associate at the Center, I'm also a Doctoral Candidate in the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (MSASS) Social Welfare Program. Currently in the prospectus/dissertation phase, which at times can be extremely laborious. However, the support of my family and colleagues helps to ease the burden.

What kind of work are you hoping to do upon graduation?

I am hoping to take a break from the rigors of academia. While academia will always be an option, I look to continue serving the community in a capacity that will further accentuate my research and leadership skills.

What do you like to do in your free time?

When I am not spending time with my family or writing, I love to play and watch basketball and listen to music. I consider music to be my therapy and often the type of music I am listening to reveals a lot about my current mood. You can tell if I am motivated, angry, happy or just experiencing feelings of nostalgia. It can also be a polite way of avoiding conversation.

If you were given \$1,000 and you had to spend it on something fun for yourself, what would you buy?

Prior to beginning my doctoral studies, I was an avid gamer. Halo, Call of Duty, Madden, and NBA 2K were all in heavy rotation. If I had \$1,000 to spend on something fun for myself (hopefully it is after I have defended my dissertation), I would buy a new game system, complete with all my favorite games and accessories, to replace the system that I sold when I voluntarily enlisted into academic boot camp. Life used to be so simple!