

Deshaun Jordan

3:00

Deshaun - Okay. Um, so my name is Deshaun Jordan, but like I go by Dj sometimes it's a different thing on where. The high school I attended his Oxford Day Academy and I'm 16 years old.

3:15

Jordan - Tell us a little bit about the community at Oxford Day.

Deshaun - Hmm, that's a good question. The community at Oxford, Oxford, the academy is a little different from traditional high schools. Um, they push away the method from always having a teacher to guide you or just always having to raise your hand for everything to you being independent. Um, one thing that this school is preparing you also is for college. When you go to college, you're not going to necessarily have the people that's right there. You can always be like, can you help me, me, me, me this. So it gives us an opportunity to reach out. Um, one thing that our school is all together struggling with, for example, with math. And so with that, we go to the teacher for help. It still doesn't help. And so with that we have to go up to our principles and be like, we don't understand this math. And now we have like five tutors are like in our school. That was like helping us for like everyone to like be together. So it's like a really, I guess like not close community, but uh, like a family in a way that helps each other. But like, we all want to see each other succeed.

4:21

Jordan - Can you tell us a little bit about like your, um, life at home? Like who lives with you?

Deshaun - Oh, so who lives with me is my dad, my brother, and my step mom.

4:35

Jordan - Have you ever had to move or have you been like here the majority of your life?

Deshaun - Yes. I have never had to move from any like residents place. I just always stayed here and he spots on my whole life. Yes. Well I did. Um, I did live with my, it wasn't like a separation issue, but I lived with, I live with, my dad lived in East Palo Alto but over the ramp and my grandma lives like right over here. But then after when she passed and like 2018, we just moved into her house. So it wasn't like a money issue, just like we wanted to keep her house. So we just, everyone moved to her house.

5:20

Jordan - Yes. Could it, have you noticed any differences in the community here versus Oxford Day? Like can you kind of like talk about any similarities or differences?

Deshaun - Yes, I have is a really drastic, it's a really drastic change for me. Um, one of the, I guess one of the things that is different from, from here, from two 49 as academy, the, I want to say that not, I'm not saying that here, like every, all the opportunities are thrown at you, but in order for me to like I know for me when I, those trips that uh, that came up here, you just, you know, it was a raffle, you put it in, you had to have like meet certain standards. But here at Oxford Day Academy one near trips like Oxford or going to Harvard, you have to submit an application, you have to show that you're ready, you have to meet the qualifications and you have to, you don't have to just, you don't, and it's not that you're just changing in that when you apply, but you, they have to want to see your effort and your growth. So that's like one of the, the differences. And I guess one of the common things that the staff and people there are always there to help you. And that's, it never changed like you can always rely on people here at the 49ers academy. And rely on the people that are Oxford Day Academy.

6:40

Jordan - so would you say that both are kinda a family life?

Deshaun - yes. But student wise, I wish I could still have the same friends that I had here and there and because it's entering into high school now it's a little different for me. Um, I guess like I'm really been exposed with the friendship and who's this? And so it was just like, I prefer not to deal with all that and drama and I just stay with the friends that I had here for an as academy cause like we all just stuck together and we never really, and if there was problems we like, you know what, you're not going to be like the off you'd do. We are going to come together and fix the problem.

7:13

Jordan - What are your plans for after high school?

Deshaun - Um, my plans for after high school where I do want to start my own business and like, cause Um, last Friday, I guess I kind of like in a way launch my, um, like on my own podcast, I'm on podcast now and it's like, um, oh, with the, on my podcast I just talk about like, things that, that teams go through that, you know, we don't, you don't necessarily have that voice for it. And so like I feel like now that it's, cause I did do you like, you know, in a way like youtube before, but I was like, it's just a way for me to have like my own platform. But like one of the things I do want to get to in the future is like being an entrepreneur and just a businessman. Like having my own and like maybe the acting, it was just a little.

7:58

Jordan - that's super cool. Any plans for school after high school? Like you, I go to college.

Deshaun - Um, yes, I want to go. Um, I guess I want to go in like for like the drama and acting. So those schools that way.

8:15

Jordan- a four year university or...?

Deshaun- Yes! Or depending on which one...

8:23

Jordan- super cool, now kinda switching gears here being in Yuca and a super active citizen here in East Palo Alto, you're aware of gentrification and how it is really really affecting not only the people who have to leave, but the people who are also staying. In your own words, how would you describe gentrification?

Deshaun- In my own words, gentrification is the process of people with higher income moving the lower income people out in a way, now if they are doing it intentionally, I don't necessarily know, but it does cause a crisis on the local family businesses, and it's a lot of things because um with family businesses in order to necessarily have a family business that's running successfully in a certain city, most of the time you have to have to live there in that city, so what's happening is for instance facebook, they are offering people 500- or a hundred thousand or something to have their employees live locally so they can be there faster, and to be honest it gives them more benefits if they live there closer, so when your offering a person from east palo alto, you know, a hundred thousand dollars, the houses here in East Palo Alto are running towards a million dollars which for people whos working in tech companies compared to living somewhere in a higher area, that's more cheaper so your gonna want to move here so now the east palo alto residents are moving out to El Grove, sacramento, or just Gilroy the places that are cheaper but even out there they're getting more expensive so it's just leaving everyone in a place where they just don't know where to be.

10:08

Jordan- Who do you think has the power to fight this? Cause it's obviously not going away and these tech companies have all the power they want and there's definitely...?

Deshaun- The people who have the power are the... The people who I think have the power are the community members that live there because if you noticed a drastic change and your almost in away seeing a racial divide, your gonna want to break that in a way, not necessarily in a way that is a war or a crime, your gonna want to break that in a way were you get your community back again, because again when you have people that you don't know moving into your community the things that you do that are normal are scary or dangerous to them so it sometimes leads to people getting the cops called on them which is, in most times very unnecessary to do and it you know makes you uncomfortable in your own city. And it's like why should i

11:08

Jordan-so the racial divide is really destructive in your community?

Deshaun- Yes, yes

11:10

Jordan- do you have any stories or anything that you've experienced that fits this topic?

Deshaun- Any stories? I don't necessarily know of any stories but I know that East Palo Alto with the work of UCA we did pass measure HH which places a small tax on large businesses

here in East Palo Alto. I think one of the reasons... which is like a victory for the city of East Palo Alto... I think one of the reasons we did that, is because facebook, i don't necessarily know so I don't want to be like really...I don't want to be like DJ said this, but facebook offered the city of east palo alto, like this deal, like oh we're gonna them a certain amount of money each year and we never got it, no I don't think it was facebook it was amazon, they said they were gonna have their employees working there, they wanted to do such and such, this and this. And then they didn't do what they said they were gonna do, so when it was time for people to work there nobody could really work there, so I don't know how it happened but the only part that East Palo Alto has in amazon you could say quote on quote is this little small thing that helps East Palo Alto people find jobs, which is kinda good, but its like you promised East Palo Alto Residents you told city council members, city council members believed that they were gonna do this and it never happened, and passing the measure HH was a large victory for east palo alto because now that's um, I don't know that there's necessarily more income but it shows that not necessarily that we don't like that these companies are here but its showing that we want everyone here to have a job and a place to work and they're saying that we don't have the skills, but it's like some of the most, East Palo Alto residents are being offered jobs like custodians and things like that when they can be working in fields greater than that with their potential.

13:30

Jordan- Kinda straying away from the more economic side, how do you think this is affecting teenagers or like young people especially, and just how it affects their everyday at school...?

Deshaun - Yes I do think that gentrification affects young people, it affects it because again you're having to move to a place you're not custom to, and that with some people at our school, not being affected by gentrification or not even living in East Palo Alto, we have some people who go to my school that live across the bridge, for example, ,let's just say that those kids have to be moved out because they are in the process of being gentrified, so what happens with them is that those people that live across the bridge they can never stay after school because they have to, there parents already have to sit in an hour of traffic because of the companies here and so with that it stops them for staying and having more time with teachers, stops them from being able to ya know being able to just relate to things that are happening in the community, can you come out to the event we're having? No because I live in fremont and im not able to find a ride, it also stops the youth from going out and from being in the community and seeing other events and organizations that happen out there.

15:52

Jordan - What do you believe or what do you hope to see happen next? Obviously this issue isn't going anywhere but what do you hope to see next?

Deshaun - One thing I hope that happens next is that you know if you're moving into a city that you don't know really know about it because if you didn't know that EPA used to be the murder capital so if you want to come in, I want you to know more about the city you're movin into because in a way, it affects us because if you're walking around and acting like oh everything's ok but like are you greeting your neighbors, are you trying to get to know them and are you

protecting them? I hope to see more, not a lot of people being pushed away. Families coming back, a lot of people moving in, rent decreasing. Rent is really crazy just for 1 bed apartments here in EPA and some people really can't afford it and when you have families that can't afford it your dealing with parents arguing that leads to the kids doing other things that they shouldn't and that gets them in trouble which leads them to going to juvenile detention and other centers like that which Im seeing a lot now at my high school and other high school which leads them into getting in trouble because you don't want to be around your parents argue so you go off and do something else and get yourself in trouble and you being a person of color from EPA, you're already looked at as this character so anything you're going to get in trouble for.