

Kayla Braggs- The Accidental Agriculturalist

Overview: Kayla Braggs wants to be an industry changemaker. That is, changing the agricultural industry and reshaping the narrative that comes with it.

Why you should listen:

For Kayla Braggs, pursuing a career in agriculture was never the goal. Growing up, the first thing that came to her mind about farming were tractors and chickens. A self-described “nerd”, she always loved learning, with science being her favorite subject. In fact, she planned to follow in her maternal grandfather’s footsteps and become a physician. When she finally realized medicine wasn’t for her, it was a mad dash to find a new major. She came across the food science program at Florida A&M University (FAMU), and, with the help of her mentor Dr. Verian Thomas, she decided to take a chance. What she didn’t know- she had singlehandedly changed the trajectory of her entire professional career.

Kayla has been an active member of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) since her freshman year at FAMU. She has held national officer positions for the organization as the Region II Undergraduate Student Vice President, National Undergraduate Student President, and the current Past National Undergraduate Student President. In these roles, she works to design and implement key strategic goals to increase recruitment for both students and sponsors. She is extremely passionate about recruiting students to attend 1890 Land Grant Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) like FAMU and increasing African American representation in the agriculture industry. Kayla’s high academic performance, extensive involvement, and knack for public service allowed her to receive several scholarships from organizations such as John Deere, BAYER, the National Grain and Feed Scholar, Hormel Foods as well as the USDA 1890 Scholars Fund.

Kayla Braggs is an Atlanta native and graduated Summa Cum Laude from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University with a bachelor’s degree in Food Science and Agriculture Business and is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics at Michigan State University. Her research focuses on the economic risk factors impact supply chain sustainability for small and medium scale farmers as well as how federal agricultural policy plays in the agribusiness industry.