

Kunjufu shares school, life lessons

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MIAMI GARDENS — Florida Memorial University (FMU) recently hosted a spirited keynote presentation featuring renowned speaker and scholar Jawanza Kunjufu.

During his upbeat speech, the kente cloth-clad Kunjufu focused on the importance of black colleges and universities, developing successful study habits and time management.

“When I was a student at Illinois State University, I was one of a handful of black students on a campus with more than 10,000 students. I felt alone sometimes,” he said. “Here at FMU you have students and professors that look like you and care for you. Don’t take that experience for granted.”

A prolific author, Kunjufu has penned more than 33 books including bestsellers Keeping Black Boys out of Special Education, Black Students: Middle Class Teachers, and There is Nothing Wrong with Black Students. He communicated a desire to “dispel myths and untruths,” that impact black America.

“It’s amazing that we believe all of the good stereotypes about people of other cultures. Yet, they are not many good stereotypes about us,” he added.

Citing numerous studies and statistics, he said: “We have to stop believing that there are more black men in prison than in college. There are more than 1.4 million black males enrolled in college and less than that behind bars.”

His presentation resonated with Shawn Smith, an Elementary Education student.

“He was very motivational. His speech makes you think about how much you can achieve in life or what can be done to change or influence change within the black community,” said Smith. “We need to put more faith in our race and stop being against each other. We need to be more supportive of each other.”

Pillar Horton, an English student, also enjoyed Kunjufu’s lecture.

She resolved “to continue to be a successful black college student and prove that you can succeed while being black,” adding, “We cannot look down on our black men because they are trying to overcome many stereotypes and negative perceptions that society places on them.”

Kunjufu gave the audience three tips for success in life and academics:

Manage Time Wisely: “We all get 168 (hours) in a week. We must manage our time wisely. The only reason many of us are not passing our classes is because we are not spending enough time with the material. We are all excellent at whatever we devote our time to.”

Find Your Purpose: “Don’t submit your life to anything for a dollar. Find your purpose. Young people, the only way you can find your purpose is by having a talk with your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Build A Team: “Many of us fail in college because we are afraid to find a study partner or to use a tutor. Conversely, our friends at Harvard and Stanford are getting A’s because they have a study partner and a tutor. Get help if you need it.”