Erica Hill...There is so much to say about this Panther. Hill is a graduating senior with a Communication major, concentration in Mass Communication, and a minor in English. She has been involved in several organizations here on campus including Campus Activities Board (CAB), Panther Advisory Leaders (PALS), Gold Member’s Club (GMC), and more. Hill also founded the Pantherettes dance team.

Prairie View A&M University is lucky to have Erica Hill as a student; in fact; PV is the only college she applied to. Hill sought an HBCU collegiate experience that wasn’t too far from her home in Dallas, Texas. The decision to attend PV was easy for her, and she states that this is an “experience” that she needed to have, this is where she will go to “grow up.”

PV has enabled Erica to lose her inhibitions when talking to people. She always tries to “draw people in,” reach her hand out, and “pull people up.” Hill has been able to connect with numerous people “based on her personality alone” and attending PV has helped her to “rediscover” who she is as a person.

Erica says she wouldn’t describe herself as a leader, but her attributes speak for themselves. She claims she hasn’t “reached that pedestal yet, but it’s a work in progress.” However, she isn’t just talking about leadership positions. According to Hill, “everyone can have a leadership position, but at the end of the day, those are just positions. A leader is someone who leads even outside of their position.”

The impact Erica Hill has made while at Prairie View, will be seen and felt in the hearts of everyone she has encountered. She is leaving behind “the most prominent plus-sized dance team. They have been putting in work and hitting the ground running.” She is also proud of her Palees, and notes that they are “taking over SGA and CAB…basically taking over the campus.” Hill is so proud to say that she was here to mentor these young women and men, and she is leaving behind a “ray of sunshine” here campus.

Erica has no regrets about the decisions she’s made while at Prairie View and would do her freshman year all over again. Her advice to underclassmen is to “never be afraid to ask for help.” She continued to say that “as people of color we are afraid to ask for help… and people should never be afraid to say they need to talk to somebody.” Hill also advised that “if you need to step away, then step away. Take a break.”

During her time on campus, Erica has made it a point to ask the student body “what it is they want to see.” She has planned many events here on campus and knows that the voice of students can be very powerful and instrumental in enacting change. Hill states that “if you don’t say what you want to see, then nobody is going to care.” She always tells everyone that they “have to open their mouths.” That is something that has been told to her constantly, and she believes that “if you want something, then you have to open your mouth. If you want to see something, say something.”

This ideology goes beyond just event planning. Erica uses this philosophy as a general rule of thumb in her life. Whenever she has something to say, she speaks up. That applies to whenever she feels disrespected or unheard. Hill said that “no one is going to care about you until you make it a priority. No one is going to care about what you want until you make it a priority.” She reiterates that “if you want to see something say it, speak it into existence. It doesn’t matter how you have to do it; just go for it.” Erica is taking her own advice in stride and hopes to own her own tv studio, tv station, and small kitchen. She wants to be able to do everything she puts her mind to.

What makes Erica so unique is her passion and that she “doesn’t know when to shut up.” Hill has been presented with vast opportunities and has been able to “get to know the people” she needs to know and then “they become like family.” Hill claims that “all of her people” turn into family. Hill’s charisma has also led people to introduce themselves to her or introduce others to her. When Erica speaks, she “tries to be logical” and people know that it’s time to listen. There is always a purpose behind what she says.

There has been negative feedback to this on social media about what people want from the school and organizations, but Hill points out that when the students are given a forum or platform to voice their concerns, there isn’t a large turnout. She states that “if you want to see something, show up. Come to the open meetings that they have for the student body. The only time everyone showed up is when there was an issue with housing… if you see what you could do there, imagine how much more you could do.” Speaking up isn’t always easy for some, and Hill points out that “there will always be a negative connotation, but you have to be able to face it. There will just be battle scars and wounds.”

Despite these wounds, Erica is excited about the future but also scared. She mentioned a blanket she received from CAB and how there was a Bible verse on it that fit her very well. The verse was “she walks even though she can’t see.” That’s what makes her excited but also scared for the future. Hill says that she’s “walking towards the door,” she just “doesn’t know what’s on the other side of it.” She’ll have her answers soon enough.

The Hill congratulates Erica Hill for all her accomplishments and all the work she has put in while here at Prairie View. We see you Erica, and we thank you for all that you’ve done and all the lives that you have touched. Your presence lights up the room, and when you speak, people know to listen. I have had the pleasure of knowing you for approximately 36 minutes, and I know that my life will never be the same after just one conversation with you. Erica, you have a way about you that is so calm and reassuring. You are incredibly easy to talk to, an amazing listener, and your charisma is unmatched. I have full faith that you are going to soar outside this campus just as you have done while here. You're going to own the best TV studio and small kitchen, and you too will find someone that bends down to tie your shoes. Congratulations again, and thank you for being such a remarkable leader, mentor, friend, and Panther. We salute you.