

BY / BECCA BROADDUS

"IT'S ABOUT THE FULFILLMENT OF OTHERS, AND OTHERS BEING TAKEN CARE OF. I WANT TO CREATE AND LIVE IN A MORE COMPASSIONATE AND UNDERSTANDING WORLD."

# GROWING UP IN THE GASTON HOME, MENSA PUZZLES REPLACED COLORING BOOKS ON THE COFFEE TABLE. KAMILLE GASTON LAUDS HER MOTHER, WHO WAS WIDOWED WHEN KAMILLE WAS JUST 4 YEARS OLD, AS AN INCREDIBLY STRONG WOMAN WHO RAISED STRONG WOMEN, PUSHING HER TWO DAUGHTERS TO BE THEIR BEST SELVES. ♥ "TO [MY MOM], IT WASN'T, 'DID YOU DO THE BARE MINIMUM?' IT WAS, 'DID YOU DO THE ABSOLUTE BEST YOU COULD?' THOSE ARE THINGS THAT I CARRY WITH ME," GASTON SAID. "AM I DOING THE BEST I CAN? AM I HELPING THOSE AROUND ME DO THE BEST THEY CAN?" ♥ KAMILLE GASTON WAS CELEBRATED FOR HER STRONG WORK ETHIC AND KIND HEART EARLY ON. IN FIRST GRADE, GASTON'S SCHOOL PRINCIPAL NICKNAMED HER "LOVEBUG." NOW IN HER CAREER, HER REPUTATION FOR WORKING HARD AND LOVING OTHERS CONTINUES. HER PASSION IS PEOPLE. ♥ "THAT SOUNDS LIKE SUCH A CLICHÉ [HUMAN RESOURCES] ANSWER," SHE REMARKS. "IT'S ABOUT THE FULFILLMENT OF OTHERS, AND OTHERS BEING TAKEN CARE OF. I WANT TO CREATE AND LIVE IN A MORE COMPASSIONATE AND UNDERSTANDING WORLD." ♥ GASTON'S ANSWER IS A SELF-DESCRIBED HR CLICHÉ, WHICH SUITS HER, SINCE SHE MAJORED IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT. (IN FACT, THE MAJOR IS ONE OF THE REASONS SHE SELECTED BAYLOR.) ♥ AFTER GRADUATING FROM BAYLOR, SHE WORKED IN A DEMANDING POSITION THAT CLARIFIED HER NEXT CAREER STEP. NEXT, SHE WANTED TO WORK IN A HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) DEPARTMENT

that could invest in her training and development. So she waited for the perfect job opportunity at her mother's house.

♥ "I didn't just go to my parents' house and sit on the couch and eat ice cream," Gaston said. "I had a nest egg. I paid rent. I had been thrown into a management position, and seeing I had opportunity to grow, I wanted to make sure the job I did included that." ♥ In her commitment to finding the right job, she remained unemployed for eight months and even turned down some job offers. ♥ "At the time, I had to think, 'If I accept this job, what does that mean? What am I getting? What am I giving up?'"

♥ Gaston stopped asking those questions when on a visit to Waco, she attended a career fair and met an Aramark recruiter who told her about the Accelerate2Leadership Program. ♥ "The next job I took needed to give me the tools to manage others," she said. "The way [the program is] built... is to help you lead. I was so grateful that I found what I was looking for." ♥ So the Texas native braved a cold, Tex-Mex-barren Philadelphia for the long-sought-after HR gig at Aramark corporate headquarters. Gaston credits her role as an HR specialist for helping her "learn and grow as a person, a professional and a manager." In addition to gaining hands-on HR experience, Gaston provided support to a large-scale project, the scope of which involved nearly the entire U.S. portfolio, which includes more than 70,000 employees. Her ability to flourish and excel in that project guided her toward a different role in the company. After 18 months as an HR specialist, Gaston left human resources for a position as a business analyst to continue her focus on labor initiatives at Aramark.

♥ "It's still a mental struggle for me... to shift my career track away from the thing that I've poured so much into for the past five years," she admits. "This isn't ending my HR career—it's the next step in a more fluid career path. I see myself in a role where I am influencing positive change within an organization. I'm open to what that looks like." ♥ Her career path may be fluid and unpredictable, but Gaston knows one thing: Her role will include helping people. [f](#)

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