

# JONNY ARCHIVES

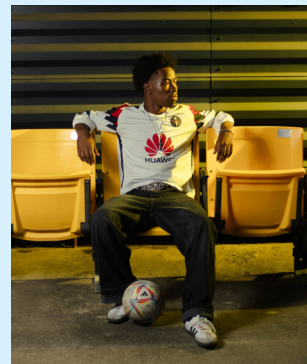
## Student photographer fuels his passion on A&T campus

Written by: Laila Cody



Jonathan Yanda poses in full body picture.

Photography is defined as the art or practice of taking and processing photographs. Some would say that it's often overlooked



Torrance posing with a soccer ball

and taken for granted as an art form and others would say it's overrated. For Jonathan Yanda, a 20-year-old sophomore automotive engineering student at North Carolina A&T State University, photography has brought more color to his life.

Yanda got his start in photography at 16 when he felt like he wanted to pick up a hobby. "I had no hobbies or interests. I would just go to school and go home everyday with nothing to do so I wanted to pick up a creative venture," Yanda says. The Charlotte native shared that around the same time he got a camera, he also passed his driving test. This motivated him to go out and capture the world as much as possible.

Now that he's at A&T his photography has skyrocketed. His photography Instagram account, under the handle @jonny-archives, has amassed over 1,000 followers and his most popular photoshoot currently has over 4,000 likes on the platform. When asked how he chose his pseudonym he said, "I originally intended to just archive my life through photography, thus, my name. I never expected to take photography this seriously and my page isn't an archive page anymore but the name stuck and has a nice ring to it." He's been able to turn a simple desire to

record his life into a passion and eventually, he hopes, a career.

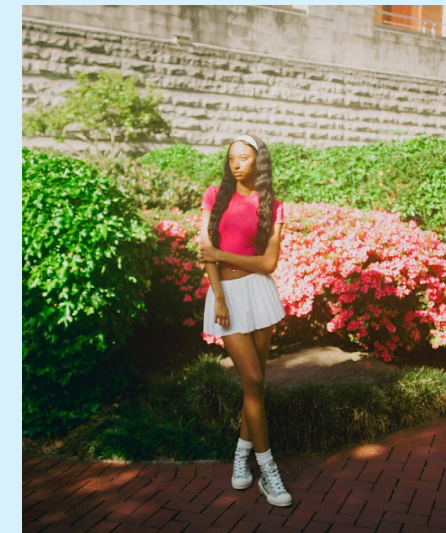
North Carolina A&T is full of black creatives from all over the country that get to be in one place at the same time. Yanda knows how rare this is and makes great use of his environment. "Going to NCAT has shown me the importance of celebrating and showing off black culture," he stated. "All of my models are black and I rarely see that on other photographers' pages so I try to make that a staple of my work," he continued. Being on an HBCU campus has given him a network of photographers to work with as well. He's able to collaborate with other photographers, have unlimited access to models and be surrounded by a community that supports him like no other.

This isn't his only source of inspiration, however. He draws inspiration from any and everywhere he possibly can. Whether it's by going to art galleries, watching short films or just seeing a cool location, he makes sure to never stop looking for the art in everything.

In addition, he looks up to a multitude of photographers on social media. He emphasizes that they are all photographers of color and that provides him with another level of connection to their images. Yanda's biggest inspiration, though, is Larry Chen. Chen is a car photographer from California which is one of Yanda's favor-

ite subjects to photograph. He also credits Chen with his love for Canon cameras.

He is very particular about his photos and puts a lot of thought and effort into all of his shoots. He says, "The most important part of an image is the lighting. I am very particular about how I light my shoots and I will keep shooting until I get the lighting perfect." His meticulousness is not shocking given that his favorite types of pictures are portraits and automobiles. The details matter in order to convey the feeling he wants the viewer to receive.



Coveny standing in a garden of colorful flowers

Currently, as he goes into his third year at A&T, he hopes to be able to do more photography that isn't solely client based and is moreso for his own gratification. This is the first time in his journey that he has complete confidence in his skills so he hopes to continue and maybe someday find a signature style that speaks for itself. His goal for next year is to show people more

of his personality so they can get to know the man behind the lens.

He also aspires to become a fashion photographer, working with different magazines and designers, and plans to get in contact with modeling agencies this summer to get his foot in the door.

One thing is for sure, no matter what he's doing he'll never give up on his craft and will always keep an eye out for the artistry that is photography.