Shani Burton was born and raised in Los Angeles, California. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from San Diego State University, where she majored in Psychology and minored in Spanish. Shani spent a summer abroad in Comillas, Spain at the Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, where she advanced her knowledge of Spanish civilization, Spanish grammar, and conversational Spanish.

Shani has served on a number of executive boards throughout her academic career at SDSU, including the Vice President of Afrikan Student Union, secretary of Black Student Science Organization, and historian of the School Psychology Student Association. Shani is a proud member of the Phi Kappa Phi honor society, is a Presidential Scholar, and served as a member of the Harambee Mentoring Program, where she encouraged and provided support for African American students to attend and graduate from college.

After graduating from San Diego State University, Shani moved back to Los Angeles, and worked as a teacher assistant and supervision aide at her former elementary school, Baldwin Hills Elementary. While working at Baldwin Hills, Shani realized her passion for wanting to help students in a greater capacity, specifically in the area of mental health and helping children overcome barriers to academic success. Shani returned to San Diego State University to pursue her graduate studies in the School Psychology Program. Shani received her Master of Science in Counseling and her Education Specialist degree in School Psychology.

Shani is a school psychologist and enjoys working with African American and Latinx students across South LA, Compton, and East LA. Shani aspires to help children reach their full potential by giving students equitable access to educational programs to fit their unique needs. She especially enjoys providing students and their families with resources to help them thrive. In her free time, Shani enjoys spending time with her family and friends, playing Dominoes, and singing karaoke. Shani is also the founder of Friends With Businesses, where she promotes Black and Brown small businesses. You can connect with her on Instagram @friends.with.businesses and join the network of businesses, organizations, podcasts, and local community events.