

**Taylen Jones, graduate**  
**William M. Raines High School**



After participating in the AnnieRuth Foundation's Summer Internship Program, I was one of 26 students selected as an award recipient. Because my career aspiration is to become a Nurse Anesthetist, I was blessed with the opportunity to be paired with four local, African American professionals, Dr. D. Gordon, Dr. J. Bennet, Dr. K. Lee, and V. Dunbar, Ph.D.

Dr. Bennet is a primary care physician located at St.Vincent's . During my one-week experience with her, I observed my first Pap Smear. Dr. Bennett engaged me in deep discussions about mental health and how it affects patients physically. On my very last day with Dr. Bennett, we went out for lunch and ate sushi and boba which was new for me but I definitely enjoyed. My next rotation was with Dr. Gordon. I was able to

witness Dr. Gordon's passion, her confidence, and the level of patience that she demonstrated as she treated her patients. It was evident that Dr. Gordon wasn't "all about the business" but genuinely cared about her patients. Dr. Gordon is inspiring; she encouraged me to take additional Spanish courses so that I can be more diverse in the medical field. Next was Dr. V., an entrepreneur who teaches young ladies how to become entrepreneurs. I only shadowed Dr. V for one day but she inspired me to fulfill my dream of starting my own Diner/Restaurant/Bakery shop (something that I've wanted to do for a long time). Dr. V taught me to never settle for less and always go after "my" dreams (versus doing what makes others happy). Lastly, I had the pleasure of learning from Dr. Lee. Working with Dr. Lee made me feel official. I was hands on; completing tasks for what seemed like 24/7. My coworkers were very loving and fun to be around and so was Dr. Lee. He and Ms. Lee (his Wife) always made sure I had something to do. Whether it was interacting with patients, spinning blood, working with Excel spreadsheets, or cleaning rooms, there was always something to do or learn. Fun fact, three of my middle school friends, now colleagues, also worked at Dr. Lee's office so we were able to reunite and make some post-high school memories together.

In addition to my rotations, every Monday for 6 weeks, the medical students were given the opportunity to participate in the Summer Institute; a virtual learning experience hosted by the First Coast Black Nurses Association. During this experience we were able to speak with medical professionals for an hour and a half to learn about the basics of their career, the commitment and dedication needed to be successful and their love for their profession. Another amazing thing that I was able to accomplish during my 6-week experience was earn a Basic Life Support (BLS) certification. This training was facilitated by Ms. Eunice Mathis, CEO of the Florida Training Academy.

I am truly blessed to have been selected as an AnnieRuth Foundation Summer Internship Program Award Recipient! My desire to become a Nurse Anesthetist has been fueled by this experience.