

**Taylor Fuqua, 12th grader
Providence School of Jacksonville**



My aspiration is to graduate with a Ph.D in biochemistry. With this degree, I would like to work in either the private or federal sector. As a 2021 Award Recipient, I was placed at the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) in their Environmental Health department. My mentor was Andreina Hollis who helped me understand her profession and provided insight on where my degree and skills can take me. I am glad to have been given an opportunity to work with Ms. Andreina because she taught me so much about environmental health and life in general.

At FDOH, I learned a lot about the operation and maintenance of septic tanks. This included taking soil specifications and determining the water tables, changes in soil color, and modeling in the soil. Along with soil specifications, most inspections included determining benchmarks and elevation in comparison to the septic tank. Because there was a great amount of driving to different locations, I discover different parts of the city of Jacksonville that I never knew existed. On rainy days or days where all inspections have been fulfilled, there was plenty of office work to complete such as filling, copying, and scanning papers.

Being placed at the Florida Department of Health directly relates to my career aspiration of becoming an environmental health specialist. My internship experience was instrumental in helping prepare me for my future, college as well as my career. Although environmental specialization is not something that I would like to pursue, completing this experience was an eye-opening experience. The AnnieRuth Foundation has helped me prepare for my future because it helped me to understand what I really want to pursue as a career and provided me with insight on the professional world of business.