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Ever since I was kid, I wanted to be involved with video games. As I got older, I yearned to learn more about the design and other intricacies of the product. As I researched local companies that fully support this career field, I found none. Thankfully, as an AnnieRuth Foundation 2023 Award Recipient, I was paired with Coding for Color, a program offered by The 100 Black Men of Jacksonville. During this experience, I learned about valuable real-world responsibilities like networking, problem solving, and discovery, all from behind a computer screen, we also used a game development software called “Unity” which is a 2D/3D engine and framework that has a system for designing games or app scenes for 2D, 2.5D and 3D. I never used the software until I joined the program, and it really broadened my horizons; allowing my creative juices to flow as I learned and developed code for five little games on my own!

During the first half of the program, I attended workshops, seminars, networking events that focused on leadership and social entrepreneurship. The interactions made me step out my comfort zone for a while, as a shy and introverted individual, seeing other youth like me was a feeling of serenity, it made me feel very comfortable. The program also introduced me to a lot of life lessons that could be categorized as life nuggets, some of the ones I have written down include, Commitment, Accountability, Good Work Ethic and Time Management. All these life nuggets really showed me how important it is to take responsibility and keep an open-minded approach in the workplace, and in life! Two of my favorite projects that I completed in the program would have to be the career assessment assignment, where we had to do research on the intricacies of our career aspirations, or the vision board. I had an exciting time figuring out what inspired me to do what I love doing and create a board from it!

The AnnieRuth Summer Internship program has granted me the ability to conquer the real world with many skills, teaching me how to carry myself in a professional manner and inspire me to learn more about things that can help my future, whether it involves game design or not. This program is necessary for anyone who wants to strive for financial and economical greatness, emotionally and mentally, as it creates the blueprint for a remarkable intern to become an outstanding intern!