

My career goal is to become a general pediatrician. My ultimate goal is to become a general pediatrician who is dedicated to addressing the inequities found in the American healthcare system. Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to be a doctor. In the beginning, I saw this career path as something that was expected of me, being in a medical household. But as I grew, my reasons for wanting to be a doctor shifted. My AP African American Studies project was on the adultification of African American children. I learned how these children were refused the space to be kids, and in turn, it harmed them both socially and psychologically. While I learned more, I realized that I faced the same struggles as a child. That's when my purpose as a doctor was revealed to me. I wanted to help children, not only because I love making kids smile, but also to provide psychological and medical support during their most vulnerable stages.

To build a strong foundation for success, I committed to activities that developed transferable skills and shaped who I am. Throughout high school, I looked for opportunities that challenged me and helped me contribute to my school and community. One of the most impactful roles I took on was being my school's first Poet Laureate. As Poet Laureate, I wrote and performed poems for my school and community, hosted poetry events, made it to regionals in Poetry Out Loud, and helped name and judge the Food Bank Poetry Competition. I also published a poetry anthology that is now in our Public and school libraries. This position taught me the power of voice and gave me the experience as a leader and role model. I was so proud to find out that I encouraged other students to write poetry. Furthermore, my other involvements included JROTC, Teen PEP, Executive Warriors, Varsity XC, Varsity Track, and Field Hockey and my position as an Ambassador of the Black Youth Association have taught me teamwork, advocacy, communication, discipline, perseverance, empathy, and so many more skills that I know will help me become a pediatrician, despite not directly connecting to medicine.

As previously mentioned, my extracurriculars may not be directly related to my goals, but the classes I took were. I took mostly honors classes and took 4 APs. One of those classes was AP Biology, where I was able to gain credits for college. Now, as a biology major on the pre-med track at Rutgers University, I plan to focus on experiences that directly apply to my career goals. I applied to be a part of Douglass Residential College's Health and Medicine global village, where I will learn about how identity shapes health outcomes around the world. I've always wanted to experience the hospital atmosphere, so I applied to be a menu technician in RWJ Hospital, and I also plan to shadow a pediatrician over the summer. Additionally, I signed up for a program offered at Rutgers called ODASIS, which helps students do exponentially better in sciences and mathematics, which will lead to healthcare careers and health-related graduate programs. Lastly, I discovered that my school offers a health equity minor, which I am intending to pursue, so I can strengthen my knowledge of the systemic issues I plan to deconstruct.