Albany State Honors Student Jya Bacon Expands Path to Medicine Through Competitive Research and Medical Programs

Albany State Student Jya Bacon Gains Valuable Medical And Research Experience Through Competitive Summer Programs.


Jya Bacon Headshot

ALBANY, GA, UNITED STATES, September 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Albany State University (ASU) honors student, Jya Bacon, is gaining valuable experience across medicine, biomedical research, leadership, and community service as she prepares for a future in healthcare. A junior nursing major from Fort Pierce, Florida, Bacon recently completed two competitive summer programs at Meharry Medical College and Morehouse School of Medicine, further strengthening her goal of progressing from registered nurse to physician.

Bacon was one of six ASU scholars selected to represent the University in the Morehouse School of Medicine FIRE-UP Research Program, a competitive hands-on cancer research experience focused on health equity, clinical studies, and biomedical research methodologies. Through the program, she conducted systematic literature reviews and explored topics including artificial intelligence in healthcare and health equity, gaining a deeper understanding of how research can inform clinical decision-making and improve patient outcomes.

“FIRE-UP showed me that medicine extends far beyond the exam room. I learned how to critically evaluate scientific literature, communicate evidence effectively, and recognize the role that innovation and technology play in addressing health disparities. It showed me that meaningful change in medicine begins with asking the right questions and using evidence to create better solutions for patients.”
- Jya Bacon, Junior Nursing Major, Albany State University

Bacon also participated in a competitive six-week medical enrichment program at Meharry Medical College, where she completed advanced pre-medical coursework, clinical simulations, MCAT preparation, and other activities designed to prepare students for medical school.



Albany State University Official Stacked Logo

"My experience at Meharry Medical College was both humbling and empowering. The pace was intense, and the coursework demanded my full attention during every lecture. It pushed me beyond my comfort zone and taught me that success in medicine requires discipline and the willingness to keep going even when you're exhausted."
- Jya Bacon, Junior Nursing Major, Albany State University

Bacon's summer experiences build upon a growing record of academic achievement and professional preparation at Albany State. A member of the Velma Fudge Grant Honors Program, she has earned Dean's List recognition twice and has secured $19,000 in scholarships, including two Thurgood Marshall College Fund scholarships, the HOPE Scholarship, and the Foothills Regional High School Scholarship.

> "ASU has provided me with opportunities that allowed me to surround myself with physicians, mentors, and like-minded peers who saw the vision I had for myself."
> *Jya Bacon, Junior Nursing Major, Albany State University*

She will also serve as Miss Honors for the 2026–2027 academic year, representing the honors program and the University through leadership and service.
Bacon has pursued opportunities across healthcare, research, communications, and leadership. Her experiences include serving as a Phoebe Putney Memorial Undergraduate Cancer Researcher, shadowing a physician and volunteering at Piedmont Rockdale Hospital, and participating in the Justice 4 Black Girls Undergraduate Black Girlhood Research initiative. Through her research with Justice 4 Black Girls, Bacon is scheduled to present her findings on fatphobia and medical neglect at Spelman College in November.

On campus, Bacon serves as a Student Government Association Senator for the College of Health Professions, Public Relations Chair for Women in Pre-Med, and a member of the NAACP and Velma Fudge Grant Honors Program. She has also served as an ASU Marketing and Communications and SEEL intern, a Therapy for Black Girls Advisory Council member, and a marketing intern with Impressions of Beauty and Creative Girl Connect.

Her commitment to service extends beyond her academic and professional pursuits. Bacon has completed approximately 130 hours of community service, supporting initiatives through Piedmont Rockdale Hospital, the Velma Fudge Grant Honors Program, Women in Leadership, Impressions of Beauty, and Brand the Yard.

For Bacon, Albany State has played an important role in helping her envision a future in medicine that may not follow a traditional path.

“Albany State University has prepared me by reminding me that the road to medicine is bigger than myself. As I am actively pursuing a path from RN to MD, it is not always a journey that others understand, and there were moments when I questioned whether my goals were possible.”
- Jya Bacon, Junior Nursing Major, Albany State University

She credits the University's academic programs, mentors, and experiential learning opportunities with helping her see herself in spaces she once only hoped to reach.

“ASU has provided me with opportunities that allowed me to surround myself with physicians, mentors, and like-minded peers who saw the vision I had for myself. Through the summer programs, I was able to see myself in spaces I once hoped to reach and gain the confidence that I belonged there. Those experiences showed me that my path may look different, but it is still a path rooted in purpose and service.”
- Jya Bacon, Junior Nursing Major, Albany State University

Bacon's experiences also demonstrate the value of Albany State's commitment to experiential learning and its Honors Program, which encourages high-achieving students to pursue opportunities that extend beyond the classroom and prepare them for advanced education and professional careers.

“As an Honors student, I've learned that maintaining a high GPA is only part of the responsibility. The Honors Program has challenged me to think critically and actively pursue opportunities that will help me grow in my career and as a leader. That mindset allowed me to step into both Meharry and FIRE-UP with confidence, knowing I had already developed the work ethic needed to succeed in rigorous academic settings.”
- Jya Bacon, Junior Nursing Major, Albany State University

As she continues her nursing education and prepares for the next stage of her journey, Bacon is building a foundation that brings together clinical preparation, biomedical research, leadership, service, and advocacy.

Her journey from nursing student to emerging researcher and future physician reflects the University's commitment to creating opportunities for students to pursue ambitious goals, gain

meaningful professional experience, and use their education to serve others.

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