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Encouragement from the Beginning

Dr. Pamela Dockery-Howard, MD. was my pediatrician for most of my life. Whether I was seven or fourteen, she would make an effort to connect with me personally as her patient even though most of the decisions with regards to my healthcare were made with my mom. Her job seemed so amazing to me that after one of my appointments with Dr. Dockery, I decided that I wanted to be a pediatrician just like her when I grew up. I was around six years-of-age at the time.

To some, this might not seem to be much. Children usually envision having the vocation of those around them. That goal usually changes throughout childhood.

However, the decision at that time in my life was of no small importance. I never wondered if it were possible that I, a young African-American female, could be a doctor. I knew it was possible. If Dr. Dockery could do it, so could I. My understanding of this concept at such a young age was of huge importance since many young women, especially those of African descent, did not always have these role models that they could look up to. They were not always sure that they could have a profession such as that of a physician, a lawyer, or the like. Instead, in most cases, those women had many people telling them that they could never amount to

anything worthwhile and discouraging them from following their dreams of helping society in such ways. I never had to wonder about these things. As my mother knows, if I put my mind to something, I was stubbornly determined to do that very thing.

This summer I will start my first year as an osteopathic medical student. I must thank women like Dr. Dockery who silently encouraged me to dream big, work hard, and accomplish my goals, one of them being to become a physician.

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