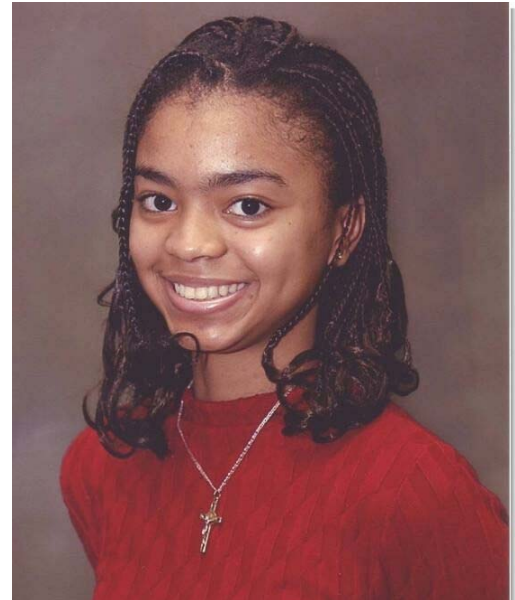


Meet Cheryl Robertson . . .

Cheryl Robertson was born in Liberia, raised in Ithaca, NY, and now resides in Montgomery, Alabama. A good student in high school, Cheryl began considering a career in the health professions. One summer, she participated in the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) at Alabama State University (ASU). Through various courses, Cheryl felt better prepared for college, and with health care experiences through the HCOP program, she knew medicine was the career path for her. She pursued research and medical internships and excelled in her courses as an undergraduate at ASU. Today, Cheryl is a second-year medical student at the University of Alabama Medical School with a 3.8 cumulative grade point average. Cheryl is also the recipient of several scholarships and awards, including an award for outstanding performance in medical physiology from the Department of Physiology and Biophysics.



“HCOP helped me establish the road map that led me to medical school. The courses I took during the summer and other exposure to health care personnel helped me make a firm decision as to whether medicine is the field I would love to explore.”

About the Program

- HCOP is authorized under Title VII of the Public Health Service Act. Together with the Centers of Excellence (COE), HCOPs function to increase the representation of minority and disadvantaged students in the health professions.
- At Alabama State University, HCOP sponsors a program called Alabama Improving Medicine for Healthy Individuals (AIM HI!).
- Students participate in activities such as cultural competence development, HIPAA training, a formal shadowing/internship program, test preparation, structured tutorial programs, academic advisement, and interaction with health professionals as role models.
- Students also have access to counseling, mentoring, and other services and resources through the program.

According to Cheryl . . .

The HCOP program was really key in fostering my interests in health careers. The English, math, and science courses gave me a head start for college success, and the speakers and tours in health fields captivated me. This program really grounded me early on in my education, and I was more serious and prepared for the future. The teachers were excellent.

The ASU HCOP program created a love for finding new knowledge and critical thinking. Right now, I am doing an NIH summer research program in the department of cardiology, and I credit ASU for giving me the research experience I needed. HCOP helped me establish the road map that led me to medical school. The course I took during the summer and other exposure to health care personnel helped me make a firm decision as to whether medicine is the field I would love to explore. I believe that HCOP plays a vital role in guiding young people to pursue health-related careers.



For more information, contact: **Erica Froyd** (efroyd@aamc.org) or **Tannaz Rasouli** (trasouli@aamc.org)

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