

UNIVERSITY OF
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Virginia-Nebraska Alliance

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Virginia State University students complete 12-week summer research internships

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Makena Hammond and Tyrone Cherry are two students who can speak to the value of serving a summer research internship at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Cherry and Hammond were recommended by faculty at the Virginia State University to Mary McNamee, Ph.D., UNMC assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs, who coordinates UNMC's Minority Student Summer Research Internship program.

Summer internships

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News from Washington Post

Dr. McNamee interviewed the students and then matched them with a UNMC researcher funded by the National Institutes of Health. The internships are funded by various NIH institutes and the UNMC researcher applies for supplemental NIH funding to cover travel expenses, food and lodging for the student to spend two consecutive summers at UNMC serving a 12-week intensive internship.

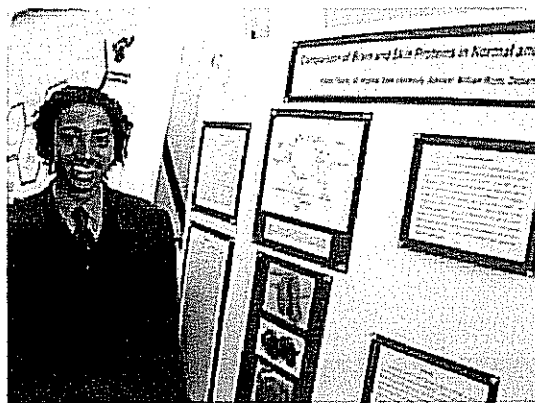


**Makena Hammond examines a
substance in the pharmaceutical
science lab.**

Makena Hammond is a pre-med biology major who hopes to enter medical school and specialize in neonatology or obstetrics. She is from Newport News, Va. and the daughter of Robert Hammond and Margaree Hood.

"What I expected at UNMC and what I found were quite different," Hammond said. "I had expected to be pushed off to the side and told to 'mix this' or 'stir that.' But they really incorporated me into the lab and made the effort to teach me what I needed to know. I was able to see how my school science education actually translates into real life. I met many people from different backgrounds. Everybody was patient with me and showed me that they really wanted me there."

Tyrone Cherry is also majoring in biology. The son of Tyrone Sr. and Deidre Cherry, he is from Charlotte, N.C. (Cherry enrolled at North Carolina State University for the 2004



Tyrone Cherry displays results of his research at the Summer Interns Research Poster Presentations.

same path as me. I encourage everybody to consider coming to UNMC for an internship. Don't let the 12-weeks scare you or the workload. There is so much you can take away from the experience – new lab techniques, expanded networking with some great people – there is a lot of added value to take out of this program."

academic year to be closer to his family.) Cherry did research on pediatric birth defects. His goal is to become a family dentist in an urban neighborhood.

"The work in my lab focused on organic chemistry and genetics – two classes I hadn't taken yet," Cherry said. "My lab mates taught me organic chemistry on our breaks. They really exposed me to the process of medical research. I made lifelong friendships with other minorities from all over the country who are on the

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