

Starting back up with YWWAV

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My name is Hali Ledet and I'm a junior at Tulane majoring in Public Health on a pre-med track. My main areas of interest are maternal/child health and women's health, particularly as they relate to marginalized groups. I hope to acquire a Masters of Public Health in Maternal Child Health, then go on to work as an OB/GYN and provide high quality, accessible care for the women who need it most. This semester will be my second semester working with the Young Women with a Vision (YWWAV) program, and I am excited to jump back into things!

YWWAV provides a safe space for middle school and high school-aged Black girls in New Orleans to share and learn from their experiences and the experiences of those with similar backgrounds through workshops, projects, community engagement

activities, and discussions that focus on issues related to human rights, intersectionality, Black feminism, reproductive justice, and social justice. My role is to aid in the facilitation of these endeavors while also serving as a mentor and providing guidance when needed. As a young Black woman from Louisiana, I see reflections of my younger self in the program participants and am looking forward to continuing to build meaningful relationships with them as we all learn and grow together.

I believe that real change in the field of reproductive justice can only be effected when a life-course approach is taken to address the issues that impact women and inhibit their agency. Before mothers are mothers they are women, and before women are women, they are girls. By continuing my internship, I hope to look at both the obstacles and triumphs of young Black girls in our city through a public health lens and learn of the ways their physical, mental, and sexual wellness are made vulnerable, and what we can do to change that so that we are one step closer to a more equitable and just society in which everyone's life is valued.