

Terrence Lurry

Class of 2021

Fayette-Ware High School

Q. Tell us a little about yourself.

A. My name is Terrence Lurry, and I am the youngest child of five siblings. Until moving to Emory, I was a Fayette County resident for all of my life.

Q. What have you done since or do you plan to do after graduating from high school?

A. I am currently a sophomore at Emory University studying chemistry and biology on the pre-physician's assistant track. During my time at Emory, I have immersed myself in a liberal arts education and pursued interests with community and civic engagement. I have served as a service committee chair for the Emory Quest Scholars Network; in this position, I coordinate visits/presentations to high schools in the Atlanta-metro area to assist students in the college and scholarship application process. Also, I have served as an assistant vice-president for the advocacy committee of the University Residence Hall Association. While serving in this position, I have advocated to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus and improve the overall student, staff, and faculty experience while at Emory. I also work as the first student associate in the Office of Undergraduate Affairs where I help gather data about the student experience and help foster focus groups.

Q. What accomplishment are you most proud of at this point in your life?

A. My most proud accomplishment up to this point is becoming a Questbridge Finalist. Questbridge is a highly competitive dual scholarship and college application process, so being selected to continue in this program was amazing in and of itself. However, since I became a finalist, I was given the opportunity to be accepted into some of the most prestigious universities in the country on nearly a full scholarship. Also, as a Quest Scholar, I have been inducted into a fantastic community on Emory's campus that prides itself on benefitting first-generation, low-income students and students from underserved communities.

Q. What impact did GEAR UP TN or your GEAR UP TN site coordinator have on you?

A. My GEAR UP TN coordinator, Ms. Broadnax, was an exceptionally kind and helpful resource throughout my high school years. She helped me pursue my passion to attend college by guiding me through the obscure points of the application process and answering questions any time they arose. She was particularly helpful when it came to working through processes like the FAFSA, the Common App, and national college application week.

Q. Of all the activities and services GEAR UP TN provided, what was the most meaningful/helpful for you?

A. The most helpful program that GEAR UP TN offered me was FAFSA help. Coming from a low-income background, paying for college was always a fear that plagued me, but being able to know that there are avenues that could help me afford it put my mind at ease a lot. Moreover, the FAFSA workshops help clarify a lot of misconceptions I had about financial aid and the correct way to complete the FAFSA which has allowed me to help other students in a similar way.

Q. What advice would you give a current high school junior or senior?

A. My three main pieces of advice to high schoolers are:

1. Make sure you research the colleges/technical schools/careers you hope to be a part of. Understanding what type of institution/job you end up working will make your life easier, if you do it early on (it saves a lot of time, money, and effort).
2. Don't be afraid to fail from time to time. It is important to take your mistakes and shortcomings and make them lessons about how to further improve and empower yourself. It is inevitable that you will fail if you try something new, especially if it's something that is worthwhile.
3. Find ways to pursue fields that you are interested in. Even if you do not follow your direct passion through your major/career, take part in extracurriculars or find friends that offer you fulfilling pieces to your life. It is important to maintain a balance between success and interest.

