



*Presents*

*The 16th Annual Journey Into Womanhood  
Virtual Awards Celebration*

*“Sweet  
Sixteen”*

*Saturday, May 16, 2020*



2020 has been a different kind of year for all of us. We had to get creative and innovative once COVID-19 hit in order to continue to serve our youth and families. We quickly moved to an online meeting platform that allowed us to continue to host our bi-monthly Journey Into Womanhood (JIW) youth meetings as a means to keep our girls engaged and informed. We kicked this off with a COVID-19 education and awareness lead by a few JIW alumna. We also hosted our first virtual Life Skills workshops to students at an afterschool program. This summer we will offer all three of our programs virtually.

Additionally, for our 16th Annual Journey Into Womanhood (JIW) Awards Celebration we had to conduct this virtually. We held a private virtual celebration to recognize the accomplishments of our 20 girls from this program year as well as the awarding of scholarships to four graduating seniors. Local broadcast journalists, Tenikka Hughes (Action News Jax), Melanie Lawson (News4Jax) and Lena Pringle (News4Jax), along with Billboard artist, J. Dash shared words of wisdom and congratulatory remarks with the girls, parents and caregivers. The JIW celebration included a live DJ, talent showcase including student's artwork, spoken word and a recorded musical performance.

Our girls, especially our seniors, were disappointed to learn that we could not have our typical banquet. They also shared their sadness for not having other senior activities, however the transition to hosting a virtual celebration was key to celebrating the seniors' accomplishments and everyone's commitment to the JIW program.

To date we are happy to also celebrate:

- 42 JIW graduates
- Average time for a girl to participate in the program is six years
- Awarded \$25,000 in scholarships
- 75% of JIW alumnae return to give their time or treasure

Because of the generosity of individuals and community organizations, Empowerment Resources and our family of programs is making an impact in the lives of youth and families. We appreciate our volunteers for making the JIW program what it is today and JIW parents and caregivers, who always step up to provide support. Thank you to our donors and corporate sponsors for supporting this critical work and sowing into the lives of youth in our community.

With gratitude,

Elexia Coleman-Moss  
 Founder and Executive Director

In memory of our fallen warriors,  
 Carissa Flournoy, Kecia Love, Soloman Stanford,  
 Jacquelyn Lowe and Tamika S. Stewart.  
 "Those who touch our lives will stay in our hearts forever."

# Our History

Empowerment Resources Inc. (ERI) is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, established in 2002. Our mission is to make children and their families stronger and empower them to become successful leaders in the community today, for a better tomorrow. We rely on volunteers to run the organization. Our signature programs include Journey Into Womanhood <sup>SM</sup>, Life Skills Workshops for teen boys and girls, and Parenting Education Seminars. Life Skills Workshops empower students to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their wellbeing and equips them with the necessary tools to make positive life decisions. ERI teaches evidence-based Nurture Parenting Programs, a family centered initiative designed to cultivate nurturing parenting skills. ERI has served more than 1,200 youth and families with programs and services that positively impact the whole family.

Since 2003, the Journey Into Womanhood (JIW) <sup>SM</sup> program has impacted the lives of more than 175 young ladies and families and has awarded youth more than \$22,000 in scholarships. A unique and inspiring program, this 25-week "rites-of-passage" initiative for girls ages 9-17 focuses on their healthy transition from girl to young woman. It addresses the real issues youth are faced with today. JIW is facilitated by experienced leaders and volunteers, who help participants cultivate their self-awareness, develop leadership skills, and put them on the path to positively impact the communities in which they live. The young ladies engage in journal writing, community service projects and enrichment trips. To date, 42 girls have graduated from the program and high school, with 94% of alumnae attending college and as of 2020, 22 have graduated with bachelor's degree.

The Journey Into Womanhood program focuses on gaining the understanding of twelve vital aspects of life including:

## The Value of SELF

*Understanding the need to love oneself*

## Drugs and Alcohol

*Preventing the effects of drug and alcohol abuse*

## Concepts of Beauty

*Caring for self, defining beauty, and personal hygiene*

## A is for Academics

*Learning proper study habits, college preparation, and public speaking*

## Health and Fitness

*The importance of exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle*

## Relationships and Social Skills

*Respecting elders, understanding friendships, and developing social skills*

## Our Society and Social Constructs

*Understanding racism and prejudice, and learning to respect other cultures*

## Food and Nutrition

*Learning healthy eating habits and selecting nutritious foods*

## Employment and Career Skills

*Preparing a resume and learning how to get the career you want*

## Community Building

*Hands-on learning is the importance of volunteering*

## Abstinence Plus and STD Prevention

*Learning the pros of waiting, and how to avoid risky behavior*

## Investments and Savings

*Understanding the difference and importance between the two*

## 2019 - 2020 Leadership

### Board of Directors

Penelope Knox, MBA  
Tasha Gatlin, MBA  
Chad Smith, B.A.

### Advisory Council

Carla Flowers, BSW  
Kirsten Keels, MBA  
Yanique Mundy, B.A.  
LaTonya Lipscomb Smith, J.D.  
LaKeisha Wells-Palmer, MEd  
Veronica Ward, MBA

### JIW Youth Advisory Council

Tamia Foston  
Dahjia Hudson  
Raven Lanier  
Jada Summers



# 2019-2020 Highlights

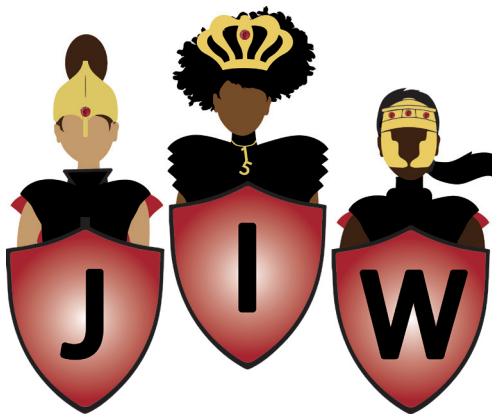


Empowerment Resources Inc. Takes Programs Virtual

Empowering Youth and Families since 2003

# Journey Into Womanhood Girls

Leila Adams	16 years old	11th Grade	San Jose Preparatory School
Kelsey Augusta	14 years old	9th Grade	Edward H. White High School
Skylar Davis	13 years old	7th Grade	LaVilla School of the Arts
Michaela Evans	16 years old	11th Grade	Robert E. Lee High School
Dahjia Hudson	16 years old	11th Grade	Mandarin High School
Raven Lanier	15 years old	10th Grade	Robert E. Lee High School
Chalize Moore	11 years old	5th Grade	Somerset Prep Academy
Jada Roberson	12 years old	7th Grade	Oaklead Junior High School
Michaela Robinson	15 years old	11th Grade	Foundation Academy
O'riel Rosier	13 years old	7th Grade	Mandarin Middle School
Angel Solomon	17 years old	11th Grade	Terry Parker High School
Zion Stanford	13 years old	7th Grade	James Weldon Johnson College Preparatory Middle School
Jada Summers	13 years old	8th Grade	Duval Charter at Baymeadows
Joya Welch	12 years old	7th Grade	Oakleaf Junior High School



## Time in JIW Program

Tamia Foston	8 years
Jonai Sanders	6 years
Simone Stephens	2 years
Celena Walker	4-6 years

## Meet Our Seniors



Celena Walker, Simone Stephens, Jonai Sanders and Tamia Foston (left to right)





*Tamia Foston*  
17 years old | 12th Grade  
First Coast Christian School

*Interests/Hobbies:* Drawing and Painting

*Goals:* To make it where my name is known to be one of the greatest ever. I plan to work in the business field or become an interior designer.

*Activities/Honors:*

JIW Youth Advisory Council Member 2018-2019

*Most enjoyable JIW experience:*

Our annual holiday party was always fun as it allowed me to bond with my JIW sister and JIW mentors.

*College you plan to attend:*

Florida State College at Jacksonville

**I would tell my younger self to keep calm and don't sweat the small stuff.**



*Jonai Sanders*  
18 years old | 12th Grade  
William M. Raines High School

*Interests/Hobbies:*

Shopping and hanging out with family and friends.

*Goals:* To open up my own daycare or become a Pediatric Nurse.

*Activities/Honors:*

Volunteer Club

*Most enjoyable JIW experience:*

Going on outings with my mentor and the annual JIW Holiday Party, especially the year where we had a gingerbread house contest and did the Mannequin Challenge.

*College you plan to attend:*

Florida State College at Jacksonville

**I would tell my younger self don't be shy, open up.**

**Be more active and participate in group activities.**



*Simone Stephens*  
17 years old | 12th Grade  
Darnell-Cookman School of the Medical Arts

*Interests/Hobbies:* Painting, Cooking, Shopping and Driving

*Goals:* To become a Physician with a specialty in fertility and travel the world.

*Activities/Honors:* Silver Award from Girls Scout

*Most enjoyable JIW experience:*

When we had the health and fitness workshop.

I enjoyed getting fit with my JIW sisters.

*Colleges accepted to:* University of North Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Barry University, Nova Southeastern, University of Tampa, Mary Baldwin University, St. John's University, Bethune Cookman University, University of West Florida, Wingate University and Chaminade University

**I would tell my younger self don't be afraid to ask for help and don't doubt yourself.**



*Celena Walker*  
17 years old | 12th Grade  
Darnell-Cookman School of the Medical Arts

*Interests/Hobbies:* Sewing, painting and singing

*Goals:* To graduate college, pursue a career in the medical field and start investing in stock market.

*Activities/Honors:* Florida 4H, Key Club, Multicultural Club, Miss SoMA Pageant

*Most enjoyable JIW experience:*

Attending a STEM field trip at the Microsoft Store in St. Johns Town Center. We were able to build shark robots!

*Colleges accepted to:* St Johns University NY, Mary Baldwin University, University of North Florida, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida A&M University and University of West Florida

**I would tell my younger self to keep pushing even when it feels like you can't go any further.**

# Our Supporters

Empowerment Resources Inc. would like to acknowledge and thank the following companies and people for their ongoing support. Without your support, our program would not be as successful.

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V101.5 FM and 93.3 FM  
Valerie Phillips and Family  
Verona Mitchell  
Veronica Ward  
Women Business Owners  
of North Florida

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Chad Smith  
Daphne Colbert  
Kirsten Keels  
Diamond Lawson  
Iva Ballou  
Marsha Grant  
Yanique Mundy

## *RJ Volunteers / \* JW Mentors*

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Angela C. Mack  
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Chad Smith  
Daphne Colbert \*  
Diamond Lawson \*

Diane King  
Elaine White  
Iva Ballou \*  
Jazmine Russ \*  
Kirsten Keels \*  
Keri Dillet  
LaKeisha Wells-Palmer  
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Mari Ganues  
Marsha Grant  
Penelope Knox  
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Stephanie Thomas  
Shameeka Clark  
Tameeka Marcelin  
Tasha Gatlin  
Veronica Ward  
Yanique Mundy \*

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And to all other friends,  
volunteers and supporters ~  
thank you!

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The Jacquelyn Rae Lowe JIW Scholarship Fund

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