

2026 SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY, PEDIATRICS IN BREVARD

Have you ever gone to the doctor, waited long past your appointment time, only to feel as if they didn't actually see you or hear you? As if you were just a number in a chart? That was my experience with doctors, until I met Dr. Kimberly Dozier-Thorton at Pediatrics in Brevard. I will forever be grateful to her for teaching me what the doctor-patient relationship is truly supposed to look like.

When I first met Dr. Dozier, I was struggling with undiagnosed ADHD, was suffering socially and had difficulty communicating in a clear and concise way. Why say something in one sentence when you can take ten sentences and ten minutes to say the same thing? Even though I was young, Dr. Dozier took the time to truly listen to me and made me feel important, valued, and understood in a way I had never experienced in a medical setting before.

With her guidance and recommendations, I was eventually diagnosed and treated. The impact on my life was profound; I began to communicate more effectively, my grades improved, and I started to build actual friendships. That first appointment when Dr. Dozier made me feel like more than just a patient will always stay with me. It marked the beginning of a doctor-patient relationship that has lasted more than nine years, even though her changing locations twice.

Dr. Dozier's care extended beyond just me—she also treated my younger sister. Having a doctor who listens and truly believes her patients, rather than dismissing symptoms as “just puberty,” weight gain, or “all in your head,” may have saved my sister's life. My sister has struggled with anxiety and depression, as well as weight and menstrual health issues, and more recently, severe headaches and migraines. It was only because Dr. Dozier took the time to listen and investigate further that we discovered she may have an aneurysm. Without that level of care and attention, her condition might have gone unnoticed.

The most meaningful impact Dr. Dozier has had on my life is the example she set for what compassionate, comprehensive healthcare should be. While I plan to pursue a career as a veterinarian and treat patients of the four-legged variety, the lessons I have learned from her transcend both specialization and species. She has shown me the importance of listening, of valuing each patient as an individual, and of never dismissing concerns. I hope to carry those same principles into my own career, ensuring that every patient, and every owner, feels heard, respected, and cared for.

Dr. Dozier didn't just improve my health; she changed my perspective on what it means to truly care for another living being. That is a lesson I will carry with me for the rest of my life.