

Good evening, my name is Antonio Taylor. I just graduated from Rutland High School where we make it happen. In the fall I will be attending GA Southern University to further my academic studies in Biotechnology to achieve being a biochemist.

Being the new kid in the Next Level program was a challenge in the beginning because I didn't know anyone but my best of friend Nyla Palmer. She briefly told me about the ELITE program during school and I was contemplating on joining but joining this program has been one of the best decisions of my life. From meeting new people, to going on trips, and the elite's monthly meetings, I found people who I can call family.

During our monthly meetings We'd have MS Eileen who'd give the opening, Mr. Harvey who'd lead us in the abstinence section, MS Star who led us in the leadership section and MS. Jackson who led us in College and Career readiness. All the names I named are very important models who only strive to make our lives and decisions better. My favorite memory from this year's ELITE was the college trip to Baltimore. This was my first time going to the DMV area and I really did enjoy it. I was able to connect with students, coaches, and the freezing cold weather. I can honestly say that everyone at Morgan state was very focused on their grades and it inspired me to strive for greatness.

I remember during the interview process for ELITE I was nervous and thought I wouldn't make it, But God had other things planned. I went into the interview with my head held high, and no worries. One question I remember from the interview was who inspires you? My answer was my younger brother because he motivates me, he pushes me, and keeps me going. He has been Why for everything that I do. Next to the lady that has mentored and molded me since birth I want to say I appreciate all that you do and sacrifice, without you I wouldn't be where I am today. In closing remarks I want to give thanks to my ELITE members for welcoming and accepting me into the group, I honestly love each and every one of you and pray that you guys stay focused and prepared for anything life throws at you. Next I want to thank the whole Next level staff for letting me enter you guys temple and blossom into a better young man. I love you all!! Thank you for everything.