

## Woman becomes doctor with help from former NFL player

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When Natasha Spencer was younger, her friends were dropping out of school, getting pregnant and getting hooked on drugs but knew she wanted something different.

"Life for me was more on the bleak side, grim, I didn't know where my future was heading," said Spencer.

Now, Spencer has experienced a dream come true she says is thanks to a chance encounter with Derrick Brooks. Brooks is a former FSU "All-American" and former NFL player with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Brooks mentored Spencer and other Tampa area youth as part of his "Brooks Bunch" foundation. Spencer says it was this experience that gave her the strength, support and financial means to go from nearly nothing but a dream, all the way through medical school.

"I can't describe the words," said Brooks. "I'm just truly grateful for this opportunity and I'm excited to see how her life will be blessed moving forward."

Now, Dr. Natasha Spencer says her story is a reminder that when you never give up hope anything is possible.

"Be persistent," Spencer said. "Don't ever give up, don't ever give up your dreams and always go for number one because you never know, you can accomplish it with hard work you can do it."

Spencer will complete her residency as an OBGYN at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. She says she hopes to one day return to Tampa.

"My favorite saying is throw the rope back, because however far you go you gotta throw the rope back to help get someone out of the situation they're in and I know she'll do her part."



Natasha Spencer has graduated from FSU's medical school with the help of her long-time mentor, former NFL player Derrick Brooks.

