

## **LaToya Beard**

Hi, I am LaToya Beard, a new graduate student here at Delta State University. I am currently a part of the Master of Science Community Development Program, which is a division of Social Sciences.

For those of you who may be wondering what exactly is Community Development, it is a broad term applied to the practices and academic disciplines of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of local communities. In other words, community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing these groups with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities.

I have always wanted to see changes within my community and often wondered how and what I could do to collaborate my background of Biology and Chemistry with the desires I had to help my community. Community Development has given me this opportunity. It allows me the chance to focus attention on and to help enhance the quality of life for all people. I am very pleased to be a part of such a warm, cultivating, and embracing group of individuals who are seeking to make changes, solve local problems, and build a sense of community.