My name is Destiny Styles, and my major is Kinesiology but I have a very strong interest in African American history. This summer, I wanted to find out more about African Americans and find more primary sources from African Americans during the Civil War era. I knew very little about the Civil War prior to coming to college so I wanted to dig deeper into the subject with a focus on African Americans. It was very hard finding writings written by African Americans so that was a challenge I took from the start.

My goals changed a little from the start of my research to the end since I could not find much on what I went in looking for. I started off by looking for African Americans’ attitudes during the Civil War but as I started to do more reading, I changed my topic to focusing on how the Civil War impacted the African Americans in positive and negative ways. At the end of my research, I came to the conclusion that history is not taught correctly in grade school. It is said that Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves but after my research, I have found that not to be true. I also found that African Americans still had celebrations, religious services, started families, and began new lives for themselves. I also found that they were dying and struggling while trying to take back their freedom.

My project taught me that I did not receive the information that I should have in grade school. There are too many people in the world that do not get the chance to learn their true history. I am glad to have received the chance to dig deeper into this topic and learn history that I will never forget. I would love to present my research in Elkin Isaac because this is history that many people do not know but should know. I would like to give a special thanks to the Bethune Fellows Student Research Endowment for funding my research this summer. I loved the experience and will continue to learn more about African American history.