Dr. Russell Ledet, 34, is a prime example of not only **black excellence** but **black resilience**. The Lake Charles, Louisiana native went from working security at Baton Rouge General Medical Center to being on the hospital's frontlines as a medical student during the **COVID-19 pandemic**. After graduating high school, Ledet served in the Navy for two years before moving back to Louisiana and enrolling at Southern University. While in school he worked security at the hospital and often asked doctors if they could mentor him while he took notes and studied organic chemistry. Other physicians were rightfully too busy providing patient care but Dr. Patrick Greiffenstein, the chief surgery resident, took Ledet under his wing. Dr. Greiffenstein considers Dr. Ledet a star-pupil and he's proud to see how far he's come.

Dr. Ledet went on to receive his Ph.D. in molecular oncology and tumor immunology from New York University and now he's currently working on his MD and MBA through a dual program at Tulane University, graduating in May 2022. He's also a proud husband and father. The importance of Dr. Ledet centering himself as a role model isn't lost on him, especially considering that he has two daughters who can turn on the news and see black police brutality victims. With that in mind, he focuses on black positivity like **15 White Coats**, a group of Black medical students from Tulane University who give out scholarships to fellow medical students.

CNN reports that the group formed in 2019 on the heels of a visit to Whitney Plantation in Edgard, Louisiana, and posed for a viral photo in front of the slave quarters. Dr. Ledet is the President and manager of the organization.