

PHILIP BANKSTON



Philip Bankston participated in the Agenda 21 Internship Program in the summer of 2016 while pursuing his Master of Science in Public Health at Meharry Medical College. His internship at Erlanger Health System in Chattanooga, Tennessee, under the mentorship of Elizabeth Apling, solidified his passion for healthcare administration. "It was my first time in the C-suite, my first time being in the same room with a hospital president or other executives," Bankston recalled.

“ *The experience helped me understand and develop executive presence, something that has remained crucial in my career.* **”**

Now serving as the Operations Manager for Environmental Services at Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood, Illinois, Bankston oversees hospital operations, ensuring that clinical spaces, including a newly opened \$70 million ambulatory care facility, are optimized for patient care. He attributes his career trajectory to the skills and exposure gained through the internship. "I had my first experience with construction meetings and major projects like the implementation of a new electronic medical record system. That exposure gave me a foundation for managing large-scale operations today," he explained.

His time in the program also deepened his understanding of healthcare policy and advocacy, leading him to pursue a health policy certificate through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "Seeing how TennCare impacted healthcare delivery made me realize how policy decisions shape patient care," he said. "It was eye-opening and even had me considering a legal career at one point." This experience reinforced the necessity of understanding the broader healthcare landscape beyond daily operations.

For future interns, Bankston stresses the importance of engagement and networking. "Seize every opportunity, make connections, and value the relationships you build. You need mentors who can guide you through your career," he advised. He remains grateful for the Agenda 21 Internship Program, calling it an experience that prepared him for the unexpected and set him on a path toward leadership in healthcare administration.



For more information about the program, contact Program Manager Karizma Whitfield at kwhitfield@tha.com.