Meet
Chris Copeland
Master’s program, Chemistry

Jackson State University’s master’s program after graduation, Copeland opted to go into the workforce. After a six-month stint in a 9-to-5 job, however, Copeland took JSU up on the offer. “Having to work sparked the motivation to go ahead and get my Ph.D.,” he explains.

Copeland says he thoroughly enjoys graduate school and its professional atmosphere, although he was at first surprised by the increased responsibilities. Now, he relishes both his classes and his time in the research lab. He particularly likes the “free-flowing” environment at JSU and that students are encouraged to bring their own ideas to the lab.

Copeland’s field is computational chemistry, and his research involves using ab initio methods to study the fundamental properties of small molecules. He has made presentations of his work in California and in Washington, D.C.

Copeland says he is looking forward to earning his master’s and then his Ph.D. at JSU. Eventually, he would like to work in academia, expanding the pathway for other students to obtain their degrees.