THE 7TH ANNUAL
BACK TO SCHOOL
WITH THE HISTORYMAKERS

Thursday & Friday,
Sept. 29-30, 2016
ABOUT THE HISTORYMAKERS

The HistoryMakers is a national 501(c)(3) non-profit research and educational institution committed to preserving and making widely accessible the untold personal stories of both well-known and unsung African Americans. Through the media and a series of user-friendly products, services and events, The HistoryMakers enlightens, entertains and educates the public, by helping to refashion a more inclusive record of American history.

Our Vision:
To capture America’s history one person at a time, creating a priceless video collection and giving those involved their special place in history. To educate the world about the struggles, determination and achievements of African American life, history and culture.

BACK TO SCHOOL WITH THE HISTORYMAKERS

The goals of our Back To School With The HistoryMakers program are to put black leaders (our HistoryMakers) in direct contact with young people all across the nation and to:

• Encourage student achievement, parental involvement, increased test scores, high school graduation and successful college entry and matriculation;
• Bring African American leaders into schools to engage with the community and motivate students directly;
• Bring additional resources into public school systems such as The HistoryMakers Digital Archive of oral history interviews;
• Raise awareness of the achievements of accomplished African Americans in their local communities.

Students at Turner-Drew Language Academy in Chicago, Illinois
The HistoryMakers challenge students to COMMIT to their education

“According to the students, it’s important that students know that it doesn’t stop with the classrooms they’re in today. I’m still reading, I’m still learning, I’m still gaining wisdom.”

— HistoryMaker Martha Reeves
Motown Singer

At Fletcher Maynard Academy in Cambridge, Massachusetts:

“Mr. Jenkins prepared a slide presentation with pictures of himself, his family and other well known public figures that our students were able to recognize. He was direct with his audience and also gave them a challenge, asking them to express their dreams and think about what they need to do to reach their goals.”

HistoryMaker Eddie Jenkins, Jr.
(Football Player and Labor Lawyer)

“Mr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr. explains the importance of working hard and the experiences that have shaped his life.”

— HistoryMaker The Honorable Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr.
Former Mayor of Philadelphia

Students at First Ward Creative Arts Academy in Charlotte, North Carolina recite the commitment pledge, led by HistoryMaker Mary C. Curtis (Former Editor at The New York Times)

“It is my intent to share those experiences – my years of nonsuccess and my years of success – and how working hard has been the keystone to that life.”

— HistoryMaker The Honorable Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr.
Former Mayor of Philadelphia
The HistoryMakers’ Speakers Encourage TIMS Students

Jacquelyn Carlisle
The Tuskegee News

On Sept. 30, students at Tuskegee Institute Middle School (TIMS) made a commitment to history and, in return, received a special meeting with important figures from Tuskegee’s past and present. TIMS participated in the program Back to School with The HistoryMakers as notable figures from the Tuskegee area discussed their contributions to the world and gave growing minds good advice on how to achieve success in all they strive to accomplish.

The HistoryMakers’ Col. Legand Burge was one of the speakers. He is the former dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture and Physical Sciences at Tuskegee University. He started in 1999 after a 30-year career in the United States Air Force. Herman Brenner White, physicist and staff scientist at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory for over three decades and who is known for his particle physics work regarding mesons and quarks, was also a speaker.

Spearheaded by teacher and event chair James Jackson and school principal Rosemary Wright, students, faculty and administrators organized a professional program to accompany the morning discussion. The strength of the program came through the words of the speakers.

Burge is an Oklahoma native with a family background in military engineering. It set him on a similar path where his love of science and dedication to his country would find him working in the same field.

He encouraged students interested in science to stay on that path — as he did.

“If you have a love or passion for something, that is what you need to do,” he said. “I love science and it has allowed me to do the things I love to do. And it has afforded to pay me.”

He encouraged the students to be committed to themselves, their families, to pay their taxes and to vote. “Be committed to help your community,” he concluded.

White, a native of Tuskegee, attended Tuskegee Institute High School (the building that now houses TIMS). He gave the school and city credit for his current achievements. “This community provided me with everything I needed to succeed,” he said.

White told students he developed an interest in science at an early age and that the teachers here in Tuskegee prepared him for everything he needed to accomplish all the things he did. White’s message was simple — Don’t Quit.

“The work you are doing now here at TIMS is the basis for your success,” he said. “Never quit. Commit to succeed. You may not yet know what success means, but commit right now to be the best students you can possibly be.”

The HistoryMakers’ focus is to capture the stories of accomplished black Americans and create an accessible digital collection to serve as a resource for students, teachers, scholars, documentary producers and media. As far as Principal Wright was concerned, the organization’s mission couldn’t be more timely or useful.

“History is very important,” she told her students. “You have to know your history to know where you’re going.”
WHAT MAKES A HISTORYMAKER?

A HistoryMaker is someone who:

- Is African American by descent
- Has made significant accomplishments in his or her own life
- Is associated with a particular movement, organization or association that is influential or important to the African American community

HISTORYMAKER CATEGORIES

- ArtMaker
- LawMaker
- PoliticalMaker
- BusinessMaker
- MediaMaker
- ReligionMaker
- CivicMaker
- MusicMaker
- ScienceMaker
- EducationMaker
- MedicalMaker
- SportsMaker
- EntertainmentMaker
- MilitaryMaker
- StyleMaker

The past year has been tumultuous for our nation and the world at large. Deleterious to our society and our youth is the lack of civility, role models and examples of success. In response, The HistoryMakers, the nation’s largest African American video oral history archive has expanded its annual day of service, Back to School With The HistoryMakers, into a yearlong program that kicks off this fall with classroom and assembly visits by African American leaders, and will continue throughout the year with student and teacher training, donation of its unique online digital archive to public and charter schools, and contests and awards that celebrate the work of our youth.

“If we do not take seriously the need to motivate and channel our youth even in times of tremendous acrimony and discontent, we will end up with a society that none of us wants to have. Our goal at The HistoryMakers is to be part of the solution, not the problem. We are committed to the notion that our nation’s youth, both minority and non-minority, will benefit from the stories of real world African American high achievers who have overcome obstacles in their path to success,” said The HistoryMakers Founder and Executive Director, Julieanna Richardson. An example of such a story is that of physicist Frederick Oliver, who was born in Baltimore and attended a segregated elementary school in Sparrows Point, Maryland.

“When I started school in the first grade, I was sort of behind everyone else. A lot of the kids could read in the first grade and I always remember that,” Oliver reminisced. Oliver discovered his love and aptitude for physics in high school and went on to become a top consultant to national defense firms such as the Naval Research Laboratory and Argonne National Laboratory. Students in Baltimore will hear similar accounts of inspiration and perseverance on Thursday, September 29, 2016, when Oliver joins four others in Baltimore City schools. Hundreds of other African American HistoryMakers will kick off the 7th Annual Back to School With The HistoryMakers program nationwide on September 29 and September 30, 2016.

This year, the program is expanded to include student and teacher training on the use of The HistoryMakers Digital Archive, Black History Month Speak Out Assemblies and The HistoryMakers Digital Archive Contest.
HistoryMaker Denyce Graves Visits Baltimore School to Share Story of Operatic Success

A local operatic HistoryMaker with an international reputation is bringing her expertise and candid story of her path to success to the Baltimore School for the Arts. On Thursday, famed mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves, a D.C. native, will host a special class from 2 to 4 p.m.

The performer, who was recently featured as part of a buzzworthy, star-studded dedication ceremony for the opening of Washington D.C.’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, will stop by the Baltimore performing arts school to lead a master class with a handful of vocal students. Then, Graves will host a Q&A session and talk to students about her own school experiences, offer career insight and detail her journey to the top of the global operatic food chain.

“Having our kids meet one of the leading African American opera singers in the world is a huge thrill,” says Stephanie Jayakanthan, the school’s director of marketing and communications.

Graves’ appearance is a part of a national project this fall, Back to School with the History Makers. The year-long program is a series of nation-wide events that will bring 400 leading African American voices into schools to share their stories, motivate students and discuss topics related to the African American experience especially as the presidential campaign season is underway. HistoryMakers are going ‘back to school’ in 51 cities and across 28 states.

Mellasenah Edwards, Baltimore School for the Arts’ music department head, arranged Graves’ visit with The HistoryMakers, and explains just why it’s so important for students to have the opportunity to connect with the mezzo-soprano and hear her story of perseverance and commitment in the high-stakes performing arts realm.

“Her life story is an inspiration for our students,” says Edwards, who adds, “She started off singing one of her first lessons with one of our former teachers, Lauretta Young. She did her schooling at an institution similar to BSA (Duke Ellington School for the Arts). Many of our students can see themselves having a similar career or following a similar path.”

With the program now in its seventh year and flourishing, Graves’ visit to the Baltimore School for the Arts on Thursday is one of this year’s featured The HistoryMakers events. Graves, by the way, stays busy balancing performing operatic roles across the world, taking time to make educational appearances such as these, and juggling responsibilities as an active

“Having our kids meet one of the leading African American opera singers in the world is a huge thrill”
member of the vocal faculty at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore.

The HistoryMakers, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, is the country’s largest African American video oral history archive, which is also an excellent digital resource for classrooms. To date, the organization has interviewed over 2,700 HistoryMakers with the goal of creating an archive of 5,000 interviews or 20,000 hours of unique, first person testimony in a one-of-a-kind digital archive for teachers, students and the general public.

The HistoryMakers’ founder and executive director, Julieanna Richardson emphasizes, “We are committed to the notion that our nation’s youth, both minority and non-minority, will benefit from the stories of real world African American high achievers who have overcome obstacles in their path to success.”

Back to School with The HistoryMakers is a national, year-long initiative that encourages students to make a long-term commitment to their education. To continue inspiring students all year long, this year The HistoryMakers is donating access to it’s digital archive to all participating charter and public schools. Students will have unprecedented access to an important part of American History through The HistoryMakers Digital Archive.

“I’m going back to the school in the next month to meet with students who are interested in design to talk to them about a program at The Ohio State University.”

— HistoryMaker Noel Mayo
Industrial Designer

Schools had students research the participating HistoryMakers, encouraging them to interact with the historical context of the lives and stories heard.
The HistoryMakers brings history to classrooms with Black leaders at city schools

Tatyana Bellamy-Walker
The Amsterdam News

During this year’s back-to-school season, dozens of black American leaders will visit classrooms across the city.

*The HistoryMakers*, an African American oral history archive, is providing a year-long program to educate youth about black history.

City classrooms will be introduced to the first African-American female journalist to join WABC-TV news, Roslyn “Roz” Abrams, jazz trombonist Dick Griffin, lawyer and diversity activist Kenneth Standard, speechwriter and presidential appointee, J. Terry Edmonds, a press release said.

Founder and Executive Director of *The HistoryMakers* Julieanna Richardson said it is important for students of color to share pride in their culture.

“Our communities have become increasingly disconnected and more separated around socioeconomic lines,” Richardson said. “It’s different than when I grew up. Everybody went to the same church and lived in the same communities.”

Richardson added, “People need to see others who are successful and accomplishing things with their lives. It’s a way to lift up the race.”

The city’s public and charter schools will receive a donation of online digital archive, student and teacher training and contests and awards that commemorate the work of youth.

“The digital archive will contain over 9,000 hours of testimony,” Richardson said. “It’s being used in schools. Some to teach vocabulary and context, some to teach about role models and others to teach primary source material in the curriculum.”

Past events held in Washington, D.C. and Chicago included President Obama’s senior adviser, Valerie Jarrett, and South Side hip-hop artist Common, respectively.

On Sept. 30, the launch of the seventh annual *Back to School with The HistoryMakers* program kicked-off at Thurgood Marshall Academy for Learning and Social Change, a school largely for students of color.

Nonprofit executive Dennis Terry and vice president, general counsel and secretary for the New York Public Library, Michele Coleman Mayes, shared stories of success and challenges within the workforce.

“They talk to the kids about their own journeys,” Richardson said. “We ask that the teachers prepare them before the HistoryMakers come into the classroom.”

Richardson continued, “The day is designed to get people to commit to their education.”

*The HistoryMakers* designated the Library of Congress to serve as a repository for its collection of more than 20,000 hours of first-person testimony for the archive.

“We want to get our digital archive in every school around the United States,” Richardson said. “So little still is known about black history … this is a very important time when our nation is fraught with a lot of division and violence.”

Richardson added, “This is a chance to bring the community together.”

Building a collection of more than 5,000 interviews is not an easy task. The program has interviewed more than 2,700 HistoryMakers over the past 17 years.

A single *The HistoryMakers* interview can cost up to $10,000 for production, encoding, digitizing and staff fees.

“You don’t build a collection like this without a lot of heavy lifting,” Richardson said. “It hasn’t been an easy walk, but we are here.”

This fall, 400 HistoryMakers will visit 51 cities and 28 states across the U.S.
MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Back to School with The HistoryMakers fosters meaningful relationships that leave a lasting impression on both the students and the History-Makers. Many HistoryMakers return to the schools on their own to continue to build relationships and to spread positive change.

On WLIT-FM 93.9, Chicago

“Last year we were at Paul Robeson High School. There are only 200 students in the school right now, and about 100 of them are homeless. And we brought in Tom Burrell, who founded and created the largest African American advertising agency in the nation. He had gone to that school. He was telling the kids that he came from a home with no books on the shelf, and when he arrived at Paul Robeson, he said he found himself and went on. And the kids, you should have seen them. He got their attention, and he has since adopted that school.”

—Julieanna Richardson, Founder and Executive Director The HistoryMakers

“The students are in desperate need of role models that can broaden their view of what’s possible for them. Otherwise they are stuck in a world of limited possibilities.”

—HistoryMaker Julian Manly Earls Director of the NASA’s Glenn Research Center

“Students are in desperate need of role models that can broaden their view of what’s possible for them. Otherwise they are stuck in a world of limited possibilities”

—HistoryMaker John H. Hall, Jr. Chemist and Academic Administrator Morehouse College

“Students loved Mr. McGee. They are still talking about him. He’s going to have all 112 students go to Texas Tech University to tour the different science and tech labs on what he named ‘Coronado Day’. ”

—Dr. Vickie Cooper Coronado High School Teacher El Paso, Texas

HistoryMaker Oliver McGee, III
(Civil Engineer and Howard University Professor)
Chicago based non-profit, *The HistoryMakers*, recently organized classroom visits from influential African Americans to schools across the nation. Designed to showcase a model for success among African Americans, more than 400 “HistoryMakers” encouraged and empowered D.C. students to aggressively reach for their goals.

Industry standouts like community leader Peggy Cooper Cafritz, civil rights icon Ernest Green, mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves, who spoke at Baltimore School For The Arts on Oct. 6, and public relations guru Priscilla Clarke were among the September 29 HistoryMakers opening the Back to School day of service.

*The HistoryMakers’* Founder and Executive Director Julieanna Richardson told the AFRO that if the need to motivate and channel black youth is not taken seriously, it could prove critical for society. “Our goal at *The HistoryMakers* is to be part of the solution, not the problem. We are committed to the notion that our nation’s youth, both minority and non-minority, will benefit from the stories of real world African American high achievers who have overcome obstacles in their path to success,” Richardson said.

Particularly for African American girls, the role of mentors and role models drastically reshapes career paths, life goals, and self-awareness. According to The Office of Juvenile Justice Programs, 87 percent of young women who attended mentoring programs went to college within two years of high school graduation; 52 percent were less likely to become pregnant during their teenage years; and 46 percent were less likely to use illegal drugs and alcohol.

The *HistoryMakers*, in its promotion of resilient, intellectually savvy, and principled black female leaders, according to Woodrow Wilson High School student Liana Ewell, has given voice to the accomplishments of Black women in the scheme of racial uplift that is often overlooked.

“Having so many powerful Black women share their stories resets the boundaries for a lot of us . . . it shows that we can do it too.”

For HistoryMaker Priscilla Clarke, who spoke to students at Ward 8’s Anacostia Senior High, the goal was to inspire students to dream and introduce them to real people from diverse backgrounds and who have faced various challenges.

“I am honored to be a part of this platform that informs and educates our youth to achieve their goals. I am also extremely excited about the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and the resources and historical knowledge it provides that can be shared with all generations,” Clarke told the AFRO. “I shared with the students how proud it makes you walking through our doors of history at the national mall.”

Many of the barriers to black female academic and economic success, according to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense Fund and the National Women’s Law Center joint research “Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls,” are facilitated by longstanding structural barriers, but also by not being able to see the success they desire surrounding them. *The HistoryMakers* answers that deficit past and present.

“Our girls need role models. They need to know that in every area of endeavor the black women have achieved,” Richardson told the AFRO. “There is so much about the lived Black history experience that we still need to know about. The memories in *The HistoryMakers’* collection go back to the 1700s.”
CITIES REACHED BY THE BACK TO SCHOOL WITH THE HISTORYMAKERS PROGRAM

Alabama
- Birmingham
- Montgomery
- Tuskegee
Arkansas
- Little Rock
California
- Los Angeles
- Oakland
- Sacramento
- San Francisco
Florida
- Fort Lauderdale
- Miami
- Tallahassee
Georgia
- Atlanta
Illinois
- Chicago
Indiana
- Indianapolis
Maryland
- Baltimore
Massachusetts
- Boston
Michigan
- Ann Arbor
- Detroit
- Lansing
Missouri
- St. Louis
Nevada
- Las Vegas
New Jersey
- Englewood
New York
- New York
- Syracuse
North Carolina
- Charlotte
Ohio
- Akron
- Cleveland
- Columbus
- Dayton
Pennsylvania
- Philadelphia
- Pittsburgh
Rhode Island
- Providence
South Carolina
- Hilton Head Island
Tennessee
- Chattanooga
- Memphis
Texas
- Austin
- Dallas
- Houston
- San Antonio
Utah
- Salt Lake City
Virginia
- Hampton
Washington
- Seattle
Washington, DC
Wisconsin
- Milwaukee

BY THE NUMBERS

400 HistoryMakers
51 Cities
28 States
Marquette University student, John Williams always knew that he wanted to study computer science while growing up in College Park, Georgia.

“I grew up around computers so computer science was an option that stuck out because I was exposed early on,” Williams said.

Now Williams is looking forward to graduating in December with a degree in Computer Science.

Research shows that African Americans are underrepresented in computer science fields.

“A large part of the problem with attracting minority students into computer science programs has to do with awareness,” said Hakim Weatherspoon, assistant professor in computer science at Cornell University. “I think that if students understood the tremendous career opportunities for computer science graduates, there would be more interest.”

Williams (22), is a student of Dr. Andrew B. Williams (no relation) in the Electrical and Computer Science department at Marquette University.

Dr. Williams is a professor and Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Marquette and is a ScienceMaker with the Back to School with The HistoryMakers program. He was recently a featured speaker at the Milwaukee School of the Arts.

The Back to School with The HistoryMakers program is an annual yearlong program that kicked off Fall 2016, and will continue throughout the year with classroom and assembly visits from African American leaders.

“A large part of the problem with attracting minority students into computer science programs has to do with awareness,” said Hakim Weatherspoon, assistant professor in computer science at Cornell University. “I think that if students understood the tremendous career opportunities for computer science graduates, there would be more interest.”

Williams (22), is a student of Dr. Andrew B. Williams (no relation) in the Electrical and Computer Science department at Marquette University.

Dr. Williams is a professor and Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Marquette and is a ScienceMaker with the Back to School with The HistoryMakers program. He was recently a featured speaker at the Milwaukee School of the Arts.

The Back to School with The HistoryMakers program is an annual yearlong program that kicked off Fall 2016, and will continue throughout the year with classroom and assembly visits from African American leaders.

The HistoryMakers, the nation’s largest African American video oral history archive is a non-profit organization which records the personal histories of well known leaders like President Barack Obama, General Colin Powell, poet Nikki Giovanni and computer engineer Dr. Andrew B. Williams.

“If we do not take seriously the need to motivate and channel our youth even in times of tremendous acrimony and discontent we will end up with a society that none of us want to have,” said Julieanna Richardson, founder and executive director of The HistoryMakers. “We are committed to the notion that our nation’s youth both minority and non-minority will benefit from the stories of real world African American high achievers who have overcome obstacles in their path of success.”

Dr. Williams was born in Junction City, Kansas, where crime levels tend to be higher than Kansas’s average level. But in junior high, he became curious about the video games he played and saw it as a way out.

“I saw asteroids, and was curious not only to play them but how do you build computer software,” said Dr. Williams.

Dr. Williams joined Marquette University after serving in 2004 as the assistant professor in computer and information department at Spelman College in Atlanta. In 2008, Apple Inc. CEO and co-founder Steve Jobs appointed him the first senior engineering

A study by the Computer Research Association reveals that concerning African American bachelor degree enrollment and awardees there is a 5.6 percent representation in the computer fields and even less on the Masters and Ph.D levels.

According to the Harvard Business Review, many students decide early on not to give computer science a try. A key challenge is finding ways to inspire more students to try computer science.

By 2020, there will be an estimated 1.4 million engineering and computer jobs in the U.S., and there will not be nearly enough American computer science graduates to fill those jobs.

“‘It’s not the environment you grow up in that determines where you can go in life. . . You need to have a vision that’s bigger than what your life is now. Get the education.’

Karen Stokes
The Milwaukee Courier

HistoryMaker Dr. Andrew Williams
(Talks to MPS Students About a Career in Computer Technology)

The HistoryMakers, the nation’s largest African American video oral history archive is a non-profit organization which records the personal histories of well known leaders like President Barack Obama, General Colin Powell, poet Nikki Giovanni and computer engineer Dr. Andrew B. Williams. “If we do not take seriously the need to motivate and channel our youth even in times of tremendous acrimony and discontent we will end up with a society that none of us want to have,” said Julieanna Richardson, founder and executive director of The HistoryMakers. “We are committed to the notion that our nation’s youth both minority and non-minority will benefit from the stories of real world African American high achievers who have overcome obstacles in their path of success.”

Dr. Williams was born in Junction City, Kansas, where crime levels tend to be higher than Kansas’s average level. But in junior high, he became curious about the video games he played and saw it as a way out.

“I saw asteroids, and was curious not only to play them but how do you build computer software,” said Dr. Williams.

Dr. Williams joined Marquette University after serving in 2004 as the assistant professor in computer and information department at Spelman College in Atlanta. In 2008, Apple Inc. CEO and co-founder Steve Jobs appointed him the first senior engineering

A study by the Computer Research Association reveals that concerning African American bachelor degree enrollment and awardees there is a 5.6 percent representation in the computer fields and even less on the Masters and Ph.D levels.

According to the Harvard Business Review, many students decide early on not to give computer science a try. A key challenge is finding ways to inspire more students to try computer science.

By 2020, there will be an estimated 1.4 million engineering and computer jobs in the U.S., and there will not be nearly enough American computer science graduates to fill those jobs.

“‘It’s not the environment you grow up in that determines where you can go in life. . . You need to have a vision that’s bigger than what your life is now. Get the education.’

Karen Stokes
The Milwaukee Courier

HistoryMaker Dr. Andrew Williams
(Talks to MPS Students About a Career in Computer Technology)
“Faith and God was a strong driving force in my life behind what I do and how I deal with obstacles,” Dr. Williams said.

The students at Milwaukee School of the Arts appeared excited and were fully engaged in Dr. Williams’ lecture and how computer science fit in with what students already enjoyed doing.

Dr. Williams talked to the students about STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math). STEAM is a curriculum in educating students in those disciplines by implementing them together and how they can offer real world applications and solutions.

“You can have fun, be creative and you can use it to help people. A lot of the skills you need, you already have. You’re creative and if you see a problem you try to solve it,” Dr. Williams explained.

The computer science field is lucrative. Dr. Williams mentioned that salaries for computer engineering jobs after college started out at $80,000 a year and a Ph.D, doctor of philosophy, will make $1 million more than a person who doesn’t have a Ph.D.

Dr. Williams performed a demonstration with “Rosie the Robot” to illustrate how robots can be used in everyday life to solve problems. Rosie demonstrated how she could be used as an exercise coach through exercise and dance. Dr. Williams also discussed Da Vinci surgical robots and how they were currently being used in healthcare.

“If you understand math, you can understand more about how robots work,” said Dr. Williams. “Math is a language to communicate an abstraction of something that’s real.”

The goal of Back To School with The HistoryMakers is to motivate students, to be a part of the solution.

“It’s not the environment you grow up in that determines where you can go in life. You can have high expectations,” Dr. Williams said. “You need to have a vision that’s bigger than what your life is now. Get the education.”
In an effort to nurture the development of self-motivated, self-confident and independent students while helping them become college and career-ready through the Back to School with The HistoryMakers program, John Hanson Montessori hosted NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden, Jr. for a special school visit Sept. 29 in Oxon Hill.

Bolden, who was accompanied by fellow Office of Education Deputy Associate Administrator Dr. Roosevelt Johnson, met with a few staff members, students and parents during a welcome reception and then participated in a school assembly. Bolden gave a presentation entitled “NASA’s Journey to Mars and Beyond.” Afterwards, Bolden and Johnson took a tour of the school and visited select elementary classrooms.

“In talking with Mr. Bolden and Mr. Roosevelt, they just gave us a ton of people to contact. They told us to reach out to NASA so they can possibly sponsor some students or sponsor the program in its entirety.”

“Along with [Bolden’s] visit comes also curric-ulum that we can use. There are online connections that we now have access to because we participated in The HistoryMakers’ event so that our children can continue to learn more about NASA.”

Parent Teacher Student Association Vice President Kelly Davidson said she believes Bolden’s visit presents an opportunity for a potential partnership with NASA.

“It’s a big deal because we have a LEGO robotics program for our younger students, [kindergarten] through third grade, and we were trying to introduce some sort of STEM after-school programming for our older students,” Davidson said. “In talking with Mr. Bolden and Mr. Roosevelt, they just gave us a ton of people to contact. They told us to reach out to NASA so they can possibly sponsor some students or sponsor the program in its entirety. Today was such a huge win to possibly build that partnership, but also to expose our kids to people of color who look like them who are in those fields.”

Having been the first in her immediate family to attend college, Davidson said she understands the importance of helping students become college and career ready at an early age.

“Davidson, former president of the Campus Activities Board at Prince George’s Community College, said it’s one thing to encourage students, but another to put students in the shoes of someone who’s actually accomplished goals and can hear his or hers journey.”
Tia Breckenridge, a school counselor, applied to The HistoryMakers program in July on behalf of John Hanson Montessori. Breckenridge said being a part of The HistoryMakers program is “an experience out of this world.”

“I had to meet with our STEM committee and talk to them about all the resources that NASA was giving the school so that they can share it with the students,” Breckenridge said. “Our population doesn’t always see professionals who are African American. Bolden is definitely phenomenal and so, hopefully, he will inspire many, if not all, to reach their dreams. He’s not really focused on everyone becoming a scientist or astronaut, but [more so encouraging them to stay] committed to their education to make their own dreams a reality.”

The daughter of a former quality assurance engineer at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, Su’Rae Witcher, 13, said Bolden inspired her to explore science and think about her future career goals.

“I thought it was really nice he took the time to come to our school and talk to us. It was really neat to learn new stuff,” Witcher said. “He opened up my mind to thinking about going into a field that involves science. It’s good to have a role model like Mr. Bolden because he can guide you to go on the right path.”

Other eighth grade students like Pilar Gore, Sasha Carter and Hailee Estep learned the importance of staying on the right path.

“I learned that you always have to work hard,” Gore said. “Everything you do now affects you in the future, so just do everything to your fullest.”

Carter agreed that one must have a “can-do attitude” to be successful.

“I think a lot of our students got a lot out of what Administrator Bolden had to say,” Carter said. “I took (away from the speech) that you should never say never and try your best at what you really want to accomplish.”

Having had the opportunity to oversee the transition from 30 years of space shuttle missions to a new era of exploration focused on full utilization of the International Space Station and space and aeronautics technology development, Bolden leads NASA’s team and manages its resources to advance the agency’s missions and goals.

Outside of his administrative role, Bolden is on a personal mission to spearhead a new era of STEM for students around the country, one school at a time.

“They can do anything that they want to do. They can try to mimic the HistoryMakers,” Bolden said. “I would have never, ever dreamed of any of this when I was growing up in Columbia, South Carolina to be the first African American to serve full-time as a NASA administrator under the first black president. It’s been pretty super for me. I’ve been with him for seven years now and I’ll never forget this. I’m doing something I never dreamed of doing.”

“Bringing in a guest speaker who can contribute to bridging the gap between classroom knowledge and real life scenarios can be tricky. However, adding a guest speaker who was raised in the same community is more valuable than a textbook or a curriculum guide. Having a speaker such as Amelia Ashley-Ward is a surefire way to enhance students’ educational experience, because if she did it, why can’t my students do it?”

—Emmanuel Stewart
Dr. George Washington Carver School Principal
San Francisco, California
The HistoryMakers went “Back to School” as the organization sent 400 members to schools across the U.S. to talk about their journey to success and give the teens inspiration and information to think about on Friday, September 30.

The organization focuses on sharing the life stories of thousands of African Americans and this year, they sent Greg Mack of 94.7 The Wave radio station and Dr. Karen Hill Scott, creator of California’s largest non-profit child development agency, to King/Drew Magnet High School to talk with some of the students.

“The kids were able to connect with them. The HistoryMakers program is great because they get an opportunity to see people who made history, live in action,” said Principal Reginald Brookens. “They get to hear their stories, ask them questions and interact with them in a way that wouldn’t be possible if they just read about them.”

Mack discussed his career as one of the pioneering radio hosts for West Coast hip-hop. The students were excited as he told them stories about what it was like when N.W.A. first came out, but also gained an understanding that a lot of work and long hours have to be put in to get and maintain a career. He also stressed the importance of education to the students.

Scott, who also teaches at UCLA, gave 10 tips for being successful in college. She told the students to introduce themselves to their professors and to try to stay out of the dorm room as much as possible. She also told the students to have pride in where they come from. She talked about how there will be students who are wealthy, but reminded the students that wealth doesn’t have to only be material and that they have richness in their life experiences that others don’t have.

“I feel like I come here and I can see the kids from where I came from really on track for greatness. It really is gratifying,” said Scott. “And I went to school not far from here, so I wanted them to know that it’s possible to do what you love and be successful at it.”
THANKS TO
PARTICIPANTS IN THE 7TH ANNUAL BACK TO SCHOOL
WITH THE HISTORYMAKERS

Alabama
Birmingham
Green Acres Middle School
Joe Dickson
Jeanette Jones
Malachi Wilkerson Middle School
Lt. Gen. Willie Williams
Reverend Calvin Wallace Woods, Sr.
Montgomery
Southlawn Middle School
The Honorable Vanzetta Penn McPherson
The Honorable Myron Thompson
Tuskegee
Tuskegee Institute Middle School
Legand Burge, Jr.
Herman Brenner White, Jr.
Arkansas
Little Rock
Hazen High School
Bob Nash
Stuttgart High School
Janis F. Kearney
California
Los Angeles
Crewshaw Senior High School
Benjamin Wright
King Drew Medical Magnet High School
Karen Hill-Scott
Greg Mack
KIPP Scholar Academy
H. B. Barnum
Phyllis Tucker Vinson Jackson
Santa Monica High School
T’Keyah Crystal Keymah
Susan Miller Dorsey High School
Dina Ruth Andrews
Lee Bailey
Thomas Jefferson High School
Steve McKeever
H. Mitsy Wilson
Oakland
Markham Elementary
William Lester, Jr.
Martin Luther King, Jr Elementary School
Gibor Basri
Sacramento
Rosa Parks Middle School
Frank Washington
San Francisco
Dr. George Washington Carver Elementary School
Amelia Ashley-Ward
Wallenberg High School
Cecil Hale
John Watson
Washington DC
Anacostia Senior High School
Priscilla Clarke
Bailou Senior High School
Curtis Symonds
Bethesda-Chevy Chase High
Terry Jones
Billy Martin
Calvin Coolidge High School
Lilia Abron
James Early
Cardozo Senior High School
Paul Delaney
Frank Smith
Columbia Heights Educational Campus
Ernest Green
Damascus High School
Dr. Janice Hutchinson
Samuel Williamson
Eastern Senior High School
Riley K. Temple
EL. Haynes Public Charter School
James Phillips
Yanick Rice-Lamb
Ellington School Of The Arts
Peggy Cooper Cafritz
Raymond Jackson
Friendship Collegiate Academy PCS
Will Gunn
Sgt. Maj. Michele Jones
Allen Sessions
Gaithersburg Middle School
The Honorable James Gadsden
Garrison Elementary School
Ramona Edelin
Reverend Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith
John F. Kennedy High
A. Peter Bailey
Reginald Stuart
John Hanson Montessori School
Gen. The Honorable Charles Bolden, Jr.
Mary McLeod Bethune Day Academy Public Charter School
Roger Gore
James Johnson, Jr.
Maya Angelou Public Charter School
William Gerald Fletcher, Jr.
Elaine Jones
McKinley Technical Senior High School
John Terry
Armstrong Williams
National Collegiate Preparatory PCHS
Lt. Gen. Larry Jordan
Tyrone Mitchell
Paul Laurence Dunbar High School
Reverend Marcia Dyson
Sylvester Monroe
 Phelps ACE High School
David “Oggi” Ogbum
Pine Crest Elementary
Dr. Lillian M. Beard
Richard Montgomery High School
Maureen Bunyan
Jacques Cook
Rocky Hill Middle School
Nan Arrington Peete
Roosevelt STAY Senior High School
Gen. Vincent Patton, III
Harry G. Robinson, III
School Without Walls SHS
Denise Rolark-Barnes
Rodney E. Slater
Seaton Elementary School
Deborah Lathen
Takoma Park Middle School
Ronald Jewell
Joan Langdon
The Washington Metropolitan High School
Sam Ford
Richard Prince
Washington Math Science Tech PCHS
William A. Hawkins
Westland Middle School
Leonard Haynes, III
Fern Hunt
Wheaton High School
Clive Callender
Darryl Hill
Woodrow Wilson High School
Russell Williams, II
Florida
Fort Lauderdale
Blanche Ely High School
Charles W. Cherry II
Andrew Ingraham
Dillard High School
Cecil Hayes
Niara Sudarkasa
Miami
Booker T. Washington High School
Dorothy Fields
Bea L. Hines
MAST@Florida International University
Evan Forde
Tallahassee
Griffin Middle School
Augustus Colson
Roselyn Williams
Georgia
Atlanta
Arabia Mountain High School
Juanita Baranco
Dorothy Cowser Yancy
Atlanta Youth Academy
Vernon Smith
Benjamin E. Mays High School
Howard Brown, Jr.
Robert Franklin
Ray Robinson
Conley Hills Elementary School
Joseph Henry Beasley
Jean Childs Young Middle School
The Honorable Brenda H. Cole
Alfred Msezane
John Wesley Dobbs Elementary School
Juliet Dobbs Blackburn-Beammon
Sylvia Bozeman
Almeta Cooper
I believe what The HistoryMakers is doing with its Back to School program is important and will help change lives for the better.

Seeing people who look like them and who have similar experiences helped to connect in ways that will prove invaluable.

Thanks to The HistoryMakers for allowing me to add my voice to the chorus of positive change.

God bless...

Harry Boomer
Proud HistoryMaker

HistoryMaker Harry Boomer
(Broadcast Journalist and Radio Personality on WOIO)
Detroit
Marcus Garvey Academy
The Honorable Craig Strong

Martin Luther King Jr. Sr High School
Tom A. Goss

Spain Elementary/Middle School
Luther “Badman” Keith

Missouri
St. Louis
BKG Pamoja Prep Academy
The Honorable Anne-Marie Clarke

Griffith Elementary School
Jamala Rogers

Navada
Las Vegas
Matt Kelly Elementary School
Linda Marie Allen

West Preparatory Academy
Shelley Fisher
Merald “Bubba” Knight, Jr.

New Jersey
Englewood
Dwight Morrow High School
Allison J. Davis

New York
New York
Frederick Douglass Academy
Debbyye Turner Bell
Robert Dottin

Granville T. Woods MS 584
John Atchison

High School of Fashion Industries
Patti Carpenter
Leonard Davis

PS 197 John B Russwurm School
Roz Abrams
Douglas Holloway
The Honorable Debra James

PS 273 The Wortman School
Alfred Richard Fornay

Queens Gateway To Health Sciences Secondary School
Arthur Wellesley French

Ronald Edmonds Learning Center #2 MS 484
J. Terry Edmonds

Thurgood Marshall Elementary School For Learning & Social Change
Michele Coleman Mayes
Dennis Terry

Vanguard High School
Lisa Cortes
Dr. Donna M. Mendes

Syracuse
George Fowler High School
George Langford

North Carolina
Charlotte
First Ward Creative Arts Academy
Mary C. Curtis

Ohio
Akron
STEM Middle School
Fannie Lee Brown
The Honorable Dorothy Jackson

Bedford
Glendale Primary School
Steven A. Minter

Cleveland
Caledonia Elementary School
Julian Manly Earls

Chambers Elementary School
The Honorable C. Ellen Connally

Daniel E. Morgan Elementary School
Harry Boomer

Heritage Middle School
Edward Parker

Mayfair Elementary School
Dominic Ozanne

Columbus
Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center
Lewis E. Dodley
Gene Harris

Independence High School
Noel Mayo
The Honorable Ray Miller

Dayton
Belmont High School
Willis Bing Davis

Thurgood Marshall STEM High School
Willis Bing Davis

Pennsylvania
Philadelphia
Benjamin Franklin High School
Frederic Berlty
The Honorable Theodore A. McKee
Norma Pratt

Creative And Performing Arts
Molefi Kete Asante

Philadelphia High School for Girls
Donald Camp
The Honorable Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr.

Pittsburgh
McKeeport Area High School
Marcia Sturdivant

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8
Rhode Island
Providence
Classical High School
Wayne Bowen
Sgt. William Bundy

South Carolina
Hilton Head Island
Hilton Head Island High School
Emory Campbell

Tennessee
Chattanooga
Tyner Academy
Fred Cash
Samuel Gooden

Memphis
Booker T. Washington High School
Walter Bailey, Jr.
Mark Stansbury

Hamilton Middle School
Fred Davis
The Honorable A C Wharton, Jr.

Havenview Middle School
Rochelle Stevens

Texas
Austin
Akins High School
John S. Butler

Dallas
KB Polk Center for Academically Talented and Gifted
Ernest Levert
Dr. Shawna Nesbitt

KB Polk Elementary School
Mollie Belt

Houston
M.C. Williams Middle School
Myrtis Dightman
James M. Douglas

The Lawson Academy
David Garrison
The Honorable Kenneth M. Hoyt
David Lattin

Lubbock
Coronado High School
Oliver McGee, III

San Antonio
St. Philip’s College
William Davis

Utah
Salt Lake City
Nible Park School
Ronald Gerald Coleman
The Honorable Shauna Graves-Robertson

Virginia
Hampton
Huntington Middle School
Wayne Dawkins

Washington
Seattle
Garfield High School
William Bradford

Wisconsin
Milwaukee
Assata High School
Dennis Biddle

Milwaukee High School of the Arts
Andrew Williams

“HistoryMakers Fletcher “Flash” Wiley (Lawyer and Civic Leader) and Benaree P. Wiley (Former CEO of The Partnership)

“The Wileys talked, answered questions, and did a classroom visit. It was great for the students to see examples of African American leaders in different fields.”

— Kristina Kelleher-Bianchi
Jeremiah E. Burke High School Teacher
Boston, Massachusetts
THE 7TH ANNUAL BACK TO SCHOOL
WITH THE HISTORYMAKERS