



Loudoun County Public Schools Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2024

ASHBURN, Va. - Students at Tuscarora High School celebrated Black History Month on Friday, February 23, by learning about NASA pioneers and speaking to real-life leaders in technology. Tuscarora is among several LCPS high schools hosting a traveling art exhibit from Hampton Museum honoring Black History Month. The four museum-quality pieces rotated among LCPS high schools for the month of February. The exhibit visited by students on Friday explored the history and personalities brought to light in the hit film and best-selling book “Hidden Figures.” The display features three incredible pioneers: Dorothy Vaughn, Katherine Johnson and Mary Jackson.

In addition to learning the history of contributions to science by people of color, students were able to speak with two LCPS parents who work in the technology field: Truphelia Parker, who works at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Tonia Bledsoe, who is a consultant in the area of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Both also volunteer as members of the LCPS [Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee \(MSAAC\)](#). Students enjoyed hearing about working in the tech field and asked engaging questions.

Bledsoe said that it was a pleasure to participate and enjoyed the student interactions. “Engaging with the bright minds at Tuscarora High School was a profoundly rewarding experience, illuminating the boundless potential of AI when wielded with responsibility and a deep understanding of its impact,” she said. “We must champion minority representation in STEM, as diverse perspectives are not just beneficial but essential in shaping a future where technology serves all of humanity equitably.”

Dr. Latisha Ellis-Williams, Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility also attended the event and said, “To be in a space with parents, community members, students, educators, and leadership focused on one objective, to grow students was an amazing experience.”

Tuscarora High School was a natural location for the event as next year, along with Briar Woods High School, it will host the division's new [Health and Medical Science Academy \(HAMSci\)](#). HAMSci is designed to expand learning opportunities for students in health science literacy through a curriculum centered on deeper learning that develops critical skills and competencies geared toward the healthcare field. This specialized curriculum, paired with industry credentials and work-based learning experiences, prepares students for in-demand, highly skilled healthcare workforce careers.

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