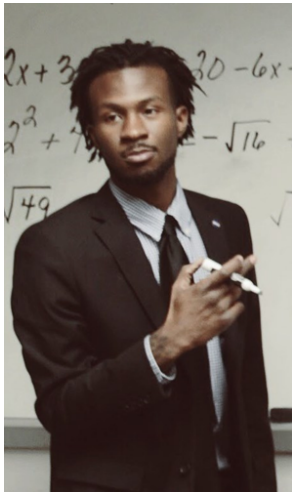


AMSC Student, Ishmael Rogers, Selected for NASA Program



Ishmael Rogers (left), SGA President, junior, and pre-engineering/chemistry major at Atlanta Metropolitan State College, is the only Georgia resident among 40 college students to be selected by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for this year's National Community College Aerospace Scholars (NACS) program. Rogers was also selected to visit the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center in December 2014. He and other community college students from across the nation worked on projects and shared ideas with NASA engineers and scientists. Selected Aerospace Scholars participated in interactive web-based activities including: twenty hours of online research; online interaction with participants across the country; webinars with NASA engineers/scientists; designing a 3D rover model using programs such as Sketch-Up or Autodesk123d; and planning a mission to Mars. For community college students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) careers or in becoming a part of the exciting future of space exploration, the basic requirements for participating in the NACS program include U.S. citizenship; current enrollment in a community college; completion of nine-plus hours of STEM coursework; and commitment to a five-week online session. Students who successfully complete the interactive web-based activities are eligible for the three-day onsite experience at NASA headquarters in Washington, DC, where they work on exploratory team projects directed by NASA engineers; attend engineering and scientific briefings; and tour NASA facilities.

"If I had to sum up my experience with the NCAS program," Rogers says, "I would use one word—insightful. It helped me develop my skills, both as a leader and a science student, while working with people from all over the country with different backgrounds." Rogers served as project engineer on his team and was responsible for keeping the group within the parameters of its mission, being charged with programming a robot to retrieve rocks with minimal human interaction, in the most cost efficient manner. "My team and I recreated the terrain and calculated the distance from the starting point to each target. This saved us a ton of money on parts. I am proud to say that my team won first place, collecting the most rocks while staying under budget." Rogers says he embraces all four of the STEM areas. "I live every day by science principles. Technology drives us all forward. Engineering produces the tools (technology) needed to drive forward, and math is how it all make sense." The NACS project also gave Rogers ideas for operating his own company. "I actually launched my company website this year and I'm looking to integrate my education sector directly into Banneker High School."

Rogers explains that, "helping people coupled with the idea of being remembered as one of the 'smart' guys," is part of what drew him to the STEM profession since childhood. "As a child I always dreamed of being like Dexter from 'Dexter's Lab'" (an animated science fiction TV series in which a boy-genius keeps a secret laboratory of inventions). Rogers muses that he then believed that getting glasses would help him build a secret lab in his own basement.

Rogers has lived in College Park, GA, all his life, and has eight siblings along with an extended family in "every state between Mississippi and Georgia." He credits his mother for being wonderful and supportive. His future plans include improving quality of life for his family members. "My oldest brother has actually been incarcerated since I was eight years old for a crime that he did not commit. It's crazy because during his trial the person who actually committed the crime confessed, yet blamed it on my brother. I plan to rectify his situation as soon as I am financially able to." In personal future goals, he adds that, "Although I wouldn't consider it a job, researching and learning is what I love to do. If I can earn a living doing it, that's a plus." Rogers, who will graduate from AMSC in December 2015, plans to apply for his masters' degree at MIT and to Harvard for a PhD.

Aside from academics (including biomedical engineering and nanotechnology) as well as owning a business, Rogers' hobbies and interests include basketball, music, reading, and space travel. His company, Infinitely Deep Research Group is located at www.infinitelydeep.com.

- - Stephanie Sidney