

# HSEP Monthly

## Special points of interest:

- Dr. Le: North Region Teacher of the Year
- NSBE Trip to Las Vegas
- Transportation Secretary La Hood



### “The School of ROBOTICS!” by Kingtrix Fernandes



Robot Designed by FIRST Robotics Team—Photo by Chelsea Hunt

The FIRST Robotics Competition is the only one of its kind “varsity sport” designed to help high school aged students discover how interesting engineering, science and technology can be.

The FIRST Robotics Competition challenges teams of teenagers and their mentors to solve a problem in a six week time period using their engineering skills to design and build a fully functioning robot to compete in an intense and thrilling competition. Each team also keeps in mind the set of rules on the game and also a very important thing in FIRST, safety. Safety always comes first when it comes to building and competing in FIRST robotics. FIRST is not all about winning. “Scoring the most points is a secondary goal.” Students are given rewards for doing a lot more than just winning, such as demonstrating team spirit, gracious professionalism and maturity, and the ability to overcome obstacles. FIRST is all about building partnerships that last. The game rules are a surprise to students every year. There are teams all over the world. Every state in the U.S. participates in this exciting event, including Hawaii!

11<sup>th</sup> in the seeding matches and went into the very competitive and intense final. Although we fell a little short in the finals, we learned a lot on how to improve our robot in the next upcoming competition in Houston, Texas! Now, we have a solid chance of being ranked much higher or even win in our home city! “We are the underdogs...and underdogs do win” -- Mr. Bedell

“The Leopards have partnered with the school’s new principal, Mr. Bedell, on school improvement projects and recruitment for the engineering magnet program. The team has stepped up its community outreach programs with providing workshops for rookie teams, adopting a nursing home, helping develop an alumni association, developing tools for teams program, and maintaining previous community outreach programs.”

We are very happy to have a robotics team like Team 57, the Leopards, here at our school and the power it has to captivate young engineers in the wonderful field of science and engineering!

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Here at Booker T. Washington/HSEP we have a team called the Leopards. Our team number is 57, and our team mascots are, yes, the Leopards. With a wonderful manager/organizer Lucia Sevcik, school representative/mentor Mr. Brienzo, head mentor Kevin Sevcik, and various other mentors, the team always stays on top of the game.

This team has been around for 12 years, being the first FIRST Robotics team in HISD. A couple of weeks ago we traveled to compete in the Peach Tree Regional in Atlanta, GA. We were very excited to compete in this regional. There were many impressive robots to view and compete with. We ranked



Competing Robots at FIRST Robotics Competition—Photo by Chelsea Hunt

## Monthly College Focus: Tuskegee University by T. Morgan

Tuskegee University is located in Alabama, and it is a Historically Black College. Tuskegee is the highest rated graduate school for engineering in Alabama. Tuskegee University was established in 1880 by act of the Alabama State Legislature. The school's first president was Dr. Booker T. Washington. Not only do they have a great engineering department, but also Tuskegee U. is a national, independent, and state-related institution of higher learning. The university has distinctive strengths in the sciences, architecture, business, engineering, health and other professions, all structured on solid foundations in the liberal arts.

They are also home to the Golden Tigers with a season of 26-1. Their sports are doing just as well as the academics. A total of

24 candidates are in the running for the 2008 Harlon Hill Trophy as the NCAA Division II College Football Player of the Year, including Tuskegee University's outstanding quarterback, Jacary Atkinson.

More than 100 groups, including Greek fraternities and sororities, are active on campus. Students can also participate in dozens of service groups, civic organizations, state clubs and honor societies representing virtually every academic discipline. They have financial aid for those who qualify.



College of Engineering, Architecture, and Physical Sciences at Tuskegee University

HSEP Monthly

On Friday, March 13, 2009, I was invited to attend to an important person in the President's cabinet, the Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood. Even though I wasn't presenting my work to him, I was very nervous, since there would be cameras everywhere. My role during his visit was to attend to him and answer any questions he might have.

Before he entered, the secret service came in; then as he came in, he shook hands with everyone in the room and seemed to be very affable. He was presented to us by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. She was a great speaker and seemed to make everyone nervous by the questions

she asked. She seemed to be very interested in the freshman's work on alternative energy. Later, after the PowerPoint presentations, Dr. Le exhibited the bigger part of his visit, the project he and other students were working on with the help of Texas A&M and many other companies.

Mr. LaHood seemed very interested and amazed at the fact that freshmen were able to work on something that seemed too difficult for them. He and Sheila Jackson Lee were very impressed and congratulated them for working on the project.

The Secretary of Transportation, Mr. LaHood, acknowledged the fact that President Obama favored and supported alternative energy, since it helped the environment. At the end of the visit, all the students, Principal Bedell, Mr. LaHood, and Sheila Jackson Lee took a picture while he received a token of appreciation from Principal Bedell, a school shirt with his name printed on it.

As they left and thanked everybody, I started thinking that this hadn't been so bad, and I was very glad to have been part of such an important event in this school's history.

## SAT Word Matching (answers on page 4)

### Words

1. \_\_\_\_ Abrasive
2. \_\_\_\_ Bilk
3. \_\_\_\_ Covert
4. \_\_\_\_ Engender
5. \_\_\_\_ Hangar
6. \_\_\_\_ Knotty
7. \_\_\_\_ Nuance
8. \_\_\_\_ Plagiarism
9. \_\_\_\_ Renown
10. \_\_\_\_ Tangent

### Definitions

- A. Complex; difficult to solve
- B. Going off the main subject
- C. Something subtle; fine shade of meaning
- D. Rough; coarse; harsh
- E. Fame
- F. Cheat; defraud
- G. Cause
- H. Storage area for a plane (like a garage)
- I. Hidden; undercover
- J. Taking credit for someone else's writing



From Left: Sheila Jackson Lee, Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on his visit to Booker T., and Principal Bedell

“North Region Awards Dr. Le Teacher of the Year” by Mrs. Oloya



Dr. Le, Houston ISD North Region Secondary Teacher of the Year

After being selected as Teacher of the Year here at Booker T., Dr. Le competed against winners of the same title from other high schools across Houston ISD’s North Region. On May 11, 2009, he was ultimately chosen to receive the honor of becoming this year’s North Region Secondary Teacher of the Year.

When asked how he was able to attain such an honor, Dr. Le explained that it was a combination of his work in the district over the six years he has been teaching. Since leaving industry as a chemist, Dr. Le has facilitated several exciting and innovative projects. This year, his Alternative Energy project has caused quite a stir of attention ever since he went to Texas A&M and challenged its professors on the ability to successfully implement this college level experiment with his high school students. Although he has been teaching this project for years and even received the BP A+ for

Energy Grant a few years ago, this year everything fell into place at the “right time with the right people.” The Secretary of Transportation for the Obama administration visited the campus to show his interest and support for the project.

Although Dr. Le has received much recognition for his alternative energy project, he contributes part of his success also to the rocketry project that has been in place for several years. Both projects, every assignment, and his personal philosophy all center around what he calls the Spiral Method, which involves constant reflection on and revision of the task at hand.

Dr. Le explained that the implementation of the Spiral Method has made him a better teacher. It allows him to improve his courses every year because he learns from years passed. Dr. Le summed it up perfectly when he said, “My teaching is a living thing. It changes. It evolves.”

Although Dr. Le is the recipient of this award, he clarified that all of it was due to the great work his students do every day. He bragged about how impressed classroom visitors like Secretary of Transportation La Hood and several rocket scientists were when listening to student presentations for various

“My teaching is a living thing. It changes. It evolves.”

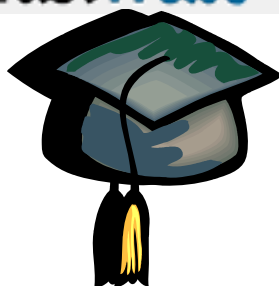
—Dr. Le

“NSBE Convention 2009: Las Vegas” by Chelsea Jackson

For five days and four nights the Booker T Washington Chapter of NSBE (National Society of Black Engineers) embarked on an intriguing journey throughout Las Vegas, Nevada. The National Society of Black Engineers is a club that promotes educational advancement and serves as a tool to help students, who wish to pursue careers in engineering professions, gain career opportunities. Annually, the National Society of Black Engineers hosts a national convention. The National convention allows NSBE members to interact and mingle with their “co-NSBE” members from all over the country. This year’s convention included workshops such as “What’s your IQ?”. This year’s convention also included tours of attractions in Las Vegas and other local cities close by such as the Hoover Dam. The convention also held a career fair allowing students to meet and greet companies from across the country. Many of the companies presented the students with



Seniors Engracia Martinez and Roderic Nelson at the 2009 NSBE Conference in Las Vegas, NV—Photo taken by Chelsea



Upcoming Scholarship Opportunities Deadlines at [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Scholarship</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Type</u>
April 15	Sallie Mae Fund American Dream Scholarship	\$5,000	Scholarship
April 22	EPA Water Quality Video Contest	\$2,500	Contest
April 24	NPG Scholarship Essay Contest	\$2,000	Essay
April 30	College Prowler Monthly Scholarship	\$2,000	Promotion



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### “College Tour” by Simone Washington

This Spring Break I attended the HBCU college tour that took us to Carolina, D.C, Georgia, and Virginia. We visited five colleges, J.C Smith University, Howard University, Clark Atlanta University, Spelman College, and Hampton University.

J.C. Smith is a weakly populated school with a huge spirit. During our visit, the students taught us chants and songs that they sing to represent their school. The low population rate makes class sizes moderate and allows the professors to be easily accessible.

Howard University is a prestigious campus that has a lot of history. Its first assignment was to educate white females. It later transformed into the HBCU we know today.

Clark Atlanta University was previ-

ously two separate colleges. Clark University and Atlanta University combined to form this large campus. The ration of women to men is 21:1, and it is ranked high in its Sociology program.

Spelman College is an all girl school. The college ranks among the top 75 Best Liberal Arts Colleges.

Hampton University is a strict campus with stern rules and regulations that will guide you to success. Students are not allowed to have vehicles until their Junior year, and all incoming Freshman students must live on campus and follow a six week curfew. Despite its rules, Hampton offers diversion and a broad range of majors.

All of the HBCU's I attended were wonderful schools. They all taught

### SAT Word Matching Answers

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. D | 6. A  |
| 2. F | 7. C  |
| 3. I | 8. J  |
| 4. G | 9. E  |
| 5. H | 10. B |



# April 2009

Important Dates to Remember at Booker T.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Engineering Day	3	4 ACT Testing
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Senior Group Photo	15	16 PTSA Fiesta Dinner Fundraiser	17 No School JROTC Military Ball	18
19	20	21	22 Report Card Day	23	24	25
26	27 LAT Math (10)	28 TAKS Math (10) Retest ELA (XL)	29 TAKS Math (11) Retest Math (XL)	30 TAKS Math (9) Science (10-11)	1 TAKS Social Studies (10-11, XL Retest)	2 SAT Testing