

WSC's 10th Annual ACE Camp! A Success!



This year's 10th Annual Washington Suburban Chapter's (WSC) NBCFAE ACE Camp was held July 13-17, 2009. The dynamic trio, WSC members- Kimberly Brooks, Glenda Mickens, and Angela Hawkins - coordinate the yearly event which has become known as the "Jewel" of the Washington Metropolitan area. Thirty-three enthusiastic students from various multi-cultural and multi-ethnic backgrounds attended the camp at the University of District of Columbia. Our tenet is "if our youth can see it, then they can do it". This simple decree exemplifies the sentiment of what our ACE Camp is all about; to expose young people to the diverse career possibilities in the field of Aviation. If our young people can see it, then indeed one day they will achieve it.

WSC NBCFAE is a partner in the agency's [Aviation Career Education](#) (ACE) program, a Flight Plan initiative aimed at turning America's youth onto careers in aviation. The ACE Program, a joint partnership between the National Black Coalition of Aviation Employees (NBCFAE) and the FAA, is a one week summer educational program for middle and high school students.

Each year participants are drawn from various schools in the MD/VA/DC metropolitan area. Opening Day's guest speakers were Joan Brown, FAA Aviation Education, Steve Millard and Marcus Ward, FAA Commercial Air and Space. Throughout the week, students participated in several off campus activities including an all day visit to Reagan Washington National Airport. Students toured the control tower, simulator, and the airport fire station. As a special treat, students visited US Coast Guard/FAA Hangars 6 & 7. They were impressed as they sat in the cockpit of a USCG Challenger Jet that is used to transport VIP's and the FAA's Citation Jet. Students also visited Andrews Air Force Base where each year we have received fantastic tours from the 459th Aerial Refueling, 1st Helicopter Squadron and the 201st Airlift Squadron. Of course the top activity of the week is the one-on-one flight time and instruction given to each student by Cloud Club II Flying, a premier black owned flying club. Angela said "The joy of seeing the excitement of student faces when they return from their first flight makes the hustle and bustle, sleep deprivation and year long planning worth it each year." The program ended with a closing ceremony on Friday, July 17, 2009. Parents and students were captivated by guest speaker, William "Bill" Broadwater, an original Tuskegee Airman and Air Traffic Controller. Kimberly said "There is evidence each year that our program truly is making a difference and changing lives. Many of our alumni have elected aviation majors and some have even become private pilots." The WSC NBCFAE ACE Camp is also a vehicle for students who desire to become pilots to be recommended for fully funded pilot programs sponsored by the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and the Organization of Black Airline Pilots (OBAP).

Each year the ACE Camp has been successful and continues to be a "jewel" in the Washington Metropolitan Area.