

Newsletter

Director's Corner

Wesley Fondal, Jr., Executive Director



"There will be interruptions, and I don't know when they will occur, and I don't know how deep they will occur, I do know they will occur from time to time, and I also know that we'll come out better on the other end."

Warren Buffett

STARBASE ROBINS has definitely been in the midst of an interruption. However, I think I can say we are definitely better on the other end. It has been a year since we have had students in our classrooms here at the Museum of Aviation. To the best of our abilities, we have mastered how to Zoom STARBASE ROBINS and have entered the world of virtual education. We have placed a new skill set in our toolbox to meet our students' and teachers' needs. But we miss our students.

We are looking forward to finally being able to instruct some students in person in April. We are also working with our district partners to return students to our facilities in the fall safely. In the meantime, we are planning for our summer academies. At this moment, we have the STARBASE ROBINS Girls STEM-powered Academy planned for this summer. It will be a virtual academy since we had to decide earlier in the year to either have it in person or virtually. This academy was initially planned to be a residential academy with our partners Mercer University STEM Education Innovation Lab and Georgia. Please see inside for more information on the academy.

It is always good to see one of our former students doing great things. Breanna Ivey's story has inspired us here at STARBASE ROBINS to know that what we do here change lives and set students up for success in a STEM career if it is their desire. It is great to see that we have had an indirect hand in the Mars rover landing. We are expecting great things from Ms. Ivey in the future.

As we begin to wind down this unusual but opportunity-filled school year, we are looking forward to our summer academies. We are always looking for career guides and mentors for our STARBASE 5th-grade program and STARBASE 2.0. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer in any capacity here at STARBASE ROBINS.

Spring 2021 Issue

About STARBASE ROBINS

STARBASE ROBINS offers a hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S.T.E.M.) curriculum to students from local school systems as well as several area private schools. STARBASE ROBINS is a Department of Defense (DoD) educational program sponsored through a partnership with the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), the Museum of Aviation, and the Museum of Aviation Foundation, Inc. STARBASE ROBINS emphasizes the importance of goal-setting, teamwork, and communication in everyday life.

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Does you know a rising 6th-8th grade girl interested in becoming empowered because STARBASE has the place for you. A fun hands-on STEM focused learning environment that will help girls feel motivated and innovative. For more information about registration and academy requirements visit

https://form.jotform.com/STARBASE_Robins/STEMACADEMYapplication

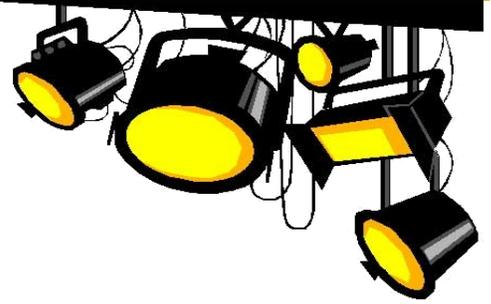


Virtual spring 2021 participating schools in STARBASE 2.0.

- Appling Elementary
- Ballard Hudson Elementary
- Byron Elementary
- Twiggs County Elementary
- Weaver Elementary



Spotlight on NEW TEAM MEMBER



5th Grade Instructor

Bneka (Nikki) Curtis was born and raised in Albany, GA. After graduating high school, I joined the United States Air Force as a Services troop. I've lived and traveled to over 25 states and 10 countries. I have two daughters who are my world and we do a lot of traveling, cooking, singing, dancing and reading. My education includes 3 AAS degrees, BA in Human Resources Management and an MA in Education with a concentration in Curriculum and Instruction and I am currently working on my doctorate in the Philosophy of Education. Educating young people is a passion that has turned into an obsession. My ultimate goal is to start my own charter school for under privileged children that will focus on tangible skillsets to ensure that our youth is prepared for an ever-changing society.

5 Best Practices for Online Learning

Tammie White

Distance learning has been the norm for over a year now, and while some students have adjusted to it, others have not. Distance learning can be best explained as a place where teachers and students meet in a virtual space. Some of the best online platforms are Google Classroom, Docebo, WiziQ, Adobe Captivate, Elucidat, and Blackboard. For students and parents here are 5 best practices for successful online learning.

1. Create a Schedule that is easy to stick to— It will be important for students to develop strong time-management skills and set aside time to read and study.
2. Create a Study Space—This can be a space where you feel comfortable, which can be outside, a local library, or a comfy reading nook.
3. Participate in Class—Take this advantage to connect with other students.
4. Stay connected with the Teacher—Do not hesitate to contact your teacher and stay in contact to ask questions.
5. Keep Track of Assignments—Take notes and pay attention to deadlines. Checking in frequently will ensure you are maintaining good study habits.



VOLUNTEER

We need YOU!



Mentors

Career Guides

FLL Volunteers

We ♥ volunteers!



Volunteering creates an opportunity to connect with our community. It provides meaning, purpose and an opportunity to meet new people and have new experiences. If you feel a need to be part of the plan that STARBASE wants to provide our future scientist, mathematician and engineers then this rewarding feeling is right here and right now.

If you are interested in volunteering and/or have any questions email: info@starbaserobins.org

STARBASE ROBINS

STARBASE ROBINS Lands on Mars: Former STARBASE Student

Interns with NASA

Tammie White



STARBASE Robins has made its mark on Mars in a very unique way. Former student and now Georgia Tech senior Breanna Ivey attended STARBASE Robins in 2010 when she was in the 5th grade with Alexander II Elementary school. Ever since Ms. Ivey can remember, she had a curiosity about how things work. She loved taking things apart just to put them back together again. This explains her love of STEM and Marvel comics' very own engineer, Ironman, Tony Stark. She wanted to use those things in a future job, but she had no idea how to mold those interests into a career.

Breanna's love of science and math helped land her an internship with the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). She was a member of the National Society of Black Engineers, and she submitted her resume at an event that Georgia Tech hosted in 2019. Breanna was a mobility test engineering intern who was part of the NASA team that worked on the Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover mission. Her job consisted of checking all of the math transformations. She spent June through August 2020 working with the NASA team.

In February 2021, the Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover became the first artificial object to land on the Red Planet after traveling over 203 days. The Mars rover, which weighs more than a ton, is the largest and heaviest NASA has ever built. The Rover mission will ultimately bring soil and rock samples back to Earth by using robotic arms to drill into the surface of Mars to find past life. The Mars rover will explore the surface of Mars for at least two years.

When asked what advice she has for girls who want a career in STEM, she said, "The first thing is to not compare yourself to other people." "People start in different places, so step back and know that you are capable and always trust your journey." The second piece of advice she wanted to share was to find your village. She said, "Find those people that can encourage you and keep you uplifted." Breanna plans to continue her education and has applied for admission into Georgia Tech's master's engineering program. With the love and support she receives from her parents and her brother, there is no doubt Breanna's future is very bright, and the sky is definitely not the limit. Congratulations Ms. Ivey, you have made us all very proud.

STARBASE ROBINS

My Journey to STARBASE

Nikki Curtis

Wow! What a journey have I been on for the past five years! My name is Nikki Curtis, and I am a new instructor here at STARBASE Robins and I am elated to be a part of such a dynamic team of educators. I hail from Albany, GA, originally and after serving 13 years in the most prestigious Air Force and traveling around the world, I landed back in Georgia.

While in the military, I found a niche for teaching when I was a military instructor at Fort Lee, VA. Here, I was a culinary instructor for new Airmen entering the Air Force. It was a great and rewarding experience to train individuals that would go out into the world and use what you taught them in our military! How cool is that?! Later, I decided that it was time to take my talents to the civilian world. In September 2016, I was honorably discharged, and I became an elementary school teacher for two years. Teaching fifth-grade students were such an awesome experience. I later moved to sixth grade as an English Language Arts teacher and that level was equally exciting. In 2019, I was awarded the coveted “Teacher of the Year” award for the 2019-2020 school year. As a motivated and innovative individual, I stepped away from teaching to pursue my doctoral degree at the end of 2019. Coincidentally, COVID-19 shut the world down shortly after I stopped working, and I decided to stay home and help parents homeschool their children during this tumultuous time. I taught students in my home along with my two children. When parents slowly started to allow their children back in school, I found myself at home alone and working on my degree. That’s when I decided it was time to get back into the field and help more students. This realization led me to STARBASE Robins, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be here and serve the children and the families of this community!

Molding a STEM Mindset for Girls

Demetria C. Smith

In a world where men and boys are seen more in STEM-related fields and careers than women, we are attempting to EMPOWER young ladies with STEM “POWERS”. Here at STARBASE Robins, we strive to enhance the repertoire of middle school-aged girls’ mindset in STEM. Each year we build an extensive curriculum that we will deliver to the girls in hopes of opening their eyes in ways they never thought possible. Over the years, we have discovered the importance of purposeful opportunities for girls interested in any STEM-related subjects. We learned that our “all-girls” academy gives the otherwise reluctant girl, a chance to tinker, explore, build, make and enjoy aspects of STEM that would most likely be stifled with the presence of boys. The girls have been extremely forthright in their thoughts about the absence of boys with many of them saying they would not be as involved in the lessons and experiments if boys were present. Many have found new avenues in using STEM in careers that they did not realize were related to science, technology, engineering, and/or math. We have used lessons in robotics, coding, engineering, conservation, agriculture, fashion, and even cosmetics to name a few to show how STEM can be used in careers. In the words of retired STARBASE Robins instructor Dawn Pannell, we look forward each summer “to waking girls up to STEM as they have never seen before” here at STARBASE Robins STEMpowered Girls Academy!

STEM

FUN FACT



Did you know?

**Polar bears are nearly undetectable by infrared cameras.
Polar bears conserve their heat and they stay warm because of their thick layer of blubber under their skin.**

JOKES

**Q. How can you make seven even?
A. Take away the 's'.**

**Q. What can be right, but never wrong?
A. Angles!**

Ice Cream in a Bag

Materials

- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cup
- Sugar
- Milk or heavy whipping cream may be used.
- Vanilla extract
- Salt.
- Ice cubes (8 C)
- Small, sealable bags, such as pint-sized or sandwich-sized Ziplocs (2)
- Gallon-sized sealable bags (2)
- Oven mitts or a small towel

Step 1

In each small sealable bag, place one tablespoon of sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of half-and-half (or milk or heavy whipping cream), and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of vanilla extract. Seal both bags well.

Step 2

Add four cups of ice cubes to one of the large, gallon-sized bags. Then add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of salt to the bag

Step 3

Put one of the small bags you prepared into the large bag with the ice cubes. Be sure both bags are sealed shut.

Step 4

Put on oven mitts or wrap the bag in a small towel and then shake the bag for five minutes. Feel the smaller bag every couple of minutes while you shake it, and take a peek at it.

Step 5

Now add four cups of ice cubes to the other large, gallon-sized bag, but this time do not add any salt to it.

Step 6

Put the other small bag you prepared into this large bag. Be sure both bags are sealed.

Put on oven mitts or wrap the bag in a small towel and then shake the bag for five minutes, as you did before. Again, feel the smaller bag every couple of minutes while you shake it, and take a peek at it.

Now enjoy



COVID Vaccination

Zeineb Yousif

With the continued widespread of the virus, it was imperative that a vaccine be created quickly to help contain it. There are currently three vaccine trials available in the United States: Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. The overall effectiveness has been reported to be between 70% - 95%, which is above the average effectiveness of the flu vaccine.

Though people are encouraged to get vaccinated and continue to comply with social distancing and wear masks; many are still weary about the vaccine. Lack of FDA approval, overall effectiveness, and side effects are some concerns that people are struggling with. The table below shows each shots effectiveness, number of doses, and some of the common side effects that have been reported.

Name of Vaccine	Number of doses	Effectiveness
Pfizer	2 doses, 21 days apart *42 days between doses is permissible when there is a delay	95%
Moderna	2 doses, 28 days apart *42 days between doses is permissible when there is a delay	94%
Johnson & Johnson	1 dose	72%

Side effects: pain at the injection site, lymph nodes at the injection site, tiredness, headaches, muscle/joint aches, nausea and vomiting, and fevers or chills. *Some rare incidents include allergic reactions, health problems, and even death.

Though the vaccination seems to be promising, Covid is still unpredictable. For many, the vaccine is one step towards avoiding the unexpected. For others, declining treatments because of side effects is enough peace of mind for them. Regardless of your decision, it is important to adhere to CDC guidelines and continue to practice safety measures to ensure the safety of yourself and those around you.



A Return to In-Person Instruction

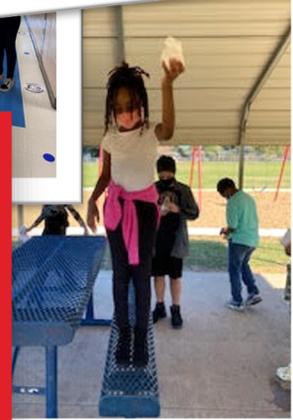
Audra Hubbard

The 2020-2021 school year certainly provided its share of challenges for STARBASE ROBINS. Going from questioning whether or not schools would be able to participate at all to create a new way to virtually teach students in their classroom at school, we prevailed. Now, after a year we will get to teach some classes to face to face! As teachers, we enjoyed getting to teach students even when it was virtual because we were still able to interact with and challenge them. Student learning was taking place, lightbulbs were coming on, questioning led to a deeper understanding, but it was just not the same. We missed the students being here physically. We can't interact and engage with the students in the same way through the camera as we can in person. The classroom behind the camera is empty and echoes. We missed getting to know the students' personalities, their smiles, their laughter. Finally, we get to end the school year getting those things we miss back. The last four schools we will be teach-

ing for the 2020-2021 school year we will be physically standing in the class with our students. We are so excited to get a chance to return to doing what we love in person. We want to say thank you to Sacred Heart, Westfield, Cirrus Academy, and Jeffersonville for letting us back into your classrooms. We want to say an even bigger thank you to Houston County and the following schools: Northside, Lindsey, Eagle Springs, Hilltop, Miller, Westside, Pearl Stephens, Centerville, Parkwood, Morningside, Shirley Hills, Quail Run, Langston Road, and Kings Chapel for working with us and helping us make serving your students virtually a successful endeavor.



Good Times Together



STEM

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