



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

February 19, 2016

MWRD visit to Museum of Science and Industry sheds light on STEM careers and water treatment for future scientists



MWRD Commissioner Kari Steele (right) talked about her upbringing, education and interest in science, her work as a chemist and now as commissioner for the MWRD. The talk exposed fourth-grade students from Benjamin Mays Elementary Academy to the many opportunities for work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) careers.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioner Kari Steele and staff brought a lesson of water treatment to students as part of a program at the Museum of Science and Industry, but it was a more valuable lifelong lesson that MWRD officials hope will inspire a future generation of scientists and engineers.

MWRD participated in the Jr. Science Café in celebration of Black Creativity 2016, a museum program that strives to expose African American youth to careers, education pathways and other opportunities in science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics (STEM) fields. Fourth-grade students from Benjamin Mays Elementary Academy had the opportunity to interact with scientists and African American STEM professionals from the MWRD in a casual but interactive setting.

In addition to Commissioner Steele, MWRD speakers included Senior Civil Engineer Raphael Frost, Senior Environmental Microbiologist Toni Glymph-Martin and Assistant Environmental Chemist Tiffany Poole, who gave the students a hands-on tutorial into the water treatment pro-



MWRD Senior Civil Engineer Raphael Frost takes students through the various steps of the water treatment process, as part of the Jr. Science Café at the Museum of Science and Industry.

cess. MWRD Maintenance and Operations workers Tony Quintanilla, Jim Landmichl and David Robertson assembled a miniature model water treatment process for display.

“We were thrilled to participate in the Jr. Science Café as part of Black Creativity 2016. It was also an honor to have such passionate and talented African-American scientists, engineers and innovators working in the STEM field, who were willing to participate in this great event,” said Commissioner Steele, a chemist herself. “It was evident that our scientists were pleased to get the opportunity to provide a positive influence on the fourth-grade students because we take great pride in protecting our water environment and sharing our knowledge with the community. We see a very bright future for these young students, and hopefully one day they might work for MWRD.”

The students and their teachers and chaperones were much appreciative for the classroom experience with the MWRD professionals, who taught them the sciences behind water treatment. Raphael Frost reviewed the intricate steps that are part of the water treatment process, while Toni Glymph-

(continued)



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6632

allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release
February 19, 2016

STEM careers *(continued)*

Martin gave the students a look at microorganisms detected in untreated water samples under the microscope and Tiffany Poole showed the students how to test water samples for pH, dissolved oxygen, ammonia and nitrate levels.

“We were well-treated and I thought the students were thoroughly engaged and had the opportunity to take part in many hands-on activities,” said Mays fourth-grade teacher Candice Bargo.

###



(L-R) MWRD carpenter David Robertson and pipefitter Jim Landmichl assemble their miniature model water treatment process prior to the Jr. Science Café program.



MWRD Assistant Environmental Chemist Tiffany Poole (right) led students through a hands-on practicum to test water samples for pH, dissolved oxygen, ammonia and nitrate levels. The students were able to see the instruments used to complete the analyses with the use of visual aids, and even learned the proper technique of removing rubber gloves.



MWRD Senior Environmental Microbiologist Toni Glymph-Martin (left) leads students on a tour of microbes discovered through her microscope while analyzing water samples. She likes to lighten the mood by naming the “bugs” she finds in untreated water after family members, inciting a few laughs from students.

Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwrdd.org) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.