In recognition of African-American History Month, NASA salutes the contributions of African-Americans to the cause of space exploration.

My name is Nate Boclair III.

I have been working for NASA Marshall Space Flight Center.

I started in 1977 as a co-op and currently today I am manager of the Space Systems Operations Branch within the Mission Operations Laboratory of the Engineering Directorate.

I remember being a very small boy and watching on TV the astronauts walk on the moon on a small black and white TV.

I remember asking my father if they are really on the moon and he said yes they are actually on the moon.

When I entered college I decided that I wanted to go into a technical field which was computer science and mathematics.
Something magically happened for me while I was in college which was the cooperative education program.

Initially, I was reluctant because I thought it would delay my education so basically I did enter the co-op program and that's how I first entered my foot into NASA.

The biggest influence in my life would be my parents. Both of my parents are educators. Some of the values they instilled in me would be a strong Christian faith, they taught me the importance of education, having a strong educational background foundation. Also they taught me the importance of working well with other people.

I think it's very important to have a personal strategic plan where basically you set your goals and evaluate yourself on a routine basis and that is your plan for success.