hello and greetings each february NASA joins with the nation in recognising National Black History Month it's a time to commemorate the enormous contributions african-americans have made toward our nation's achievements it's also a moment to reflect on how far we have come as a nation when I was a young man my service as NASA's first african-american administrator under the nation's first black president would have been nearly unthinkable through the efforts of many people of all races our nation has really changed and thanks to
the space shuttle program and NASA's cross-disciplinary exploration missions.

african-americans and many others have had access to space and also to science.

and technological careers this year's Black History Month theme.

african-americans and the civil war pays tribute to those who fought to hold our nation together at perhaps its most divided moment NASA joins with the rest of the country and recognizing african-americans who fought in that terrible conflict many of whom gave their lives in defense of the ideals for
which our nation stands today President
Obama challenges us to focus on science and technology development to retain our global competitiveness and meet the country's needs we'll need more science technology engineering and mathematics education to make those objectives a reality here at NASA we're proud of our investments in the nation's future leaders our initiatives and outreach are helping make high tech careers an option for many more african-american students who have historically been underrepresented in these fields we're
very fortunate that many African

American astronauts scientists engineers

and administrators have shared their

skills and talents to help make NASA the

world's premier science and space

exploration agency

astronauts like guy Bluford dr. mae

Jemison Fred Gregory Leland Melvin and

the late great Dr. Ronald McNair and

Michael P Anderson to name just a few

pioneer to path and space similarly

scientists like astrochemistry Emmett

Chappell who was inducted into the

national inventors hall of fame and dr.

George Carruthers who helped our Apollo
missions be more than just flags and footprints and Dr. Harriet Jenkins who helped diversify the agency as head of its Equal Employment programs made vital contributions to the space program without the historic contributions of these and many others NASA would not be the agency it is today it takes the contributions of all of us regardless of race religion ethnicity or gender to make a great space program and all those efforts not only lead to great discoveries they also help make life better for people all over the world.
encourage you to join with me in celebrating the lives and achievements of our african-american NASA family members in the spirit of excellence and sense of discovery exemplified by our agency. I encourage you to participate in educational events programs and activities planned at your Center or in your local communities let us make this a joyful celebration and build on the hope that we all possess when we join hands to create the future together you