



1
00:00:00,459 --> 00:00:17,660
I'm Fransua Thomas.

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00:00:17,660 --> 00:00:22,210
I work in the tribology and mechanical components
branch at NASA Glenn.

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00:00:22,210 --> 00:00:25,249
I've currently been working in this branch
for three years.

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00:00:25,249 --> 00:00:32,349
I started off as a co-op and currently got
hired on full-time in 2010.

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00:00:32,349 --> 00:00:34,449
I work in the field of tribology.

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00:00:34,449 --> 00:00:37,480
Tribology is the study of friction, wear,
and lubrication.

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00:00:37,480 --> 00:00:42,359
So in my labs, what I do—I do a lot of testing—testing
as far as the failure analysis.

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00:00:42,359 --> 00:00:45,780
The way things or surfaces interact and how
they rub.

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00:00:45,780 --> 00:00:51,539
Okay, so with that, we test for the lifetime
of a sample to see how long it will actually

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00:00:51,539 --> 00:00:54,839
last in space or whatever environment it's
gonna be in.

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00:00:54,839 --> 00:00:58,140

It's exciting, definitely being a lifelong dream to work for NASA.

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00:00:58,140 --> 00:00:59,140

It's great.

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00:00:59,140 --> 00:01:04,420

It allows me to think outside the box and work with a great team to pursue missions

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00:01:04,420 --> 00:01:07,150

that are going to be going into space.

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00:01:07,150 --> 00:01:10,070

I attended Tuskegee University in Alabama.

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00:01:10,070 --> 00:01:13,750

I have degrees in Physics and Electrical Engineering.

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00:01:13,750 --> 00:01:18,630

My concentration was in semiconductors, and that's one way I kind of got started into

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00:01:18,630 --> 00:01:20,280

the materials.

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00:01:20,280 --> 00:01:25,420

I used football as a means to an end to pay for my schooling.

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00:01:25,420 --> 00:01:30,780

So that's how I was able to pay for school, and I played football for four years at Tuskegee,

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00:01:30,780 --> 00:01:36,530

and I also achieved three rings and one national black championship title also.

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00:01:36,530 --> 00:01:40,280

I mentor kids throughout the Cleveland area,
as well as Tri-C.

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00:01:40,280 --> 00:01:46,060

I tutor Math or Physics since I do have a
degree in Physics also.

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00:01:46,060 --> 00:01:49,340

I get a feel or sense of gratification.

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00:01:49,340 --> 00:01:55,039

It actually fills my heart with joy when I
teach something new or a different technique

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00:01:55,039 --> 00:01:57,130

to somebody and they get it.

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00:01:57,130 --> 00:02:00,460

When that light bulb comes on in their head,
it brings a sense of purpose to me that I'm

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00:02:00,460 --> 00:02:02,759

doing what I'm supposed to be doing.

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00:02:02,759 --> 00:02:07,979

It's important for more African-American
scientists and engineers come share their

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00:02:07,979 --> 00:02:13,640

stories, go into the classrooms to help educate
these young, African-American youth about

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00:02:13,640 --> 00:02:17,560

their stories, and what they've done, and
how they have collaborated to get to where

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00:02:17,560 --> 00:02:18,560

they are today.

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00:02:18,560 --> 00:02:23,040

A lot of these kids think that sports or being an entertainer/singer will take you to that

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00:02:23,040 --> 00:02:24,100

next level.

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00:02:24,100 --> 00:02:28,790

The fact is that only about one percent actually make it in that field, and the thing is right

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00:02:28,790 --> 00:02:34,160

now with our nation, we have a lot of openings within the STEM fields, and we have to take

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00:02:34,160 --> 00:02:35,160

advantage of that.

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00:02:35,160 --> 00:02:40,460

So that's why us as African-Americans have to engage our youth.

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00:02:40,460 --> 00:02:43,900

As an African-American, my lineage means perseverance.

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00:02:43,900 --> 00:02:50,810

That's one word that I could use that could sum it all up in one word, and it means dedication,

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00:02:50,810 --> 00:02:53,240

hard work, drive, the will, guts.

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00:02:53,240 --> 00:02:59,130

That's how I try to live my life day to day is by persevering whether it's in work,

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00:02:59,130 --> 00:03:01,450

with helping friends out, mentoring to somebody.

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00:03:01,450 --> 00:03:03,030

I just try to persevere with everything I
do.