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00:00:11,629 --> 00:00:12,780

My name is Tommy Thompson.

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I'm a systems engineer, here at Marshall Space Flight Center.

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I work in EV73, Systems Test and Verification.

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I believe it's important that we look at the African American History Month and think

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about all of the contributions that African Americans have made, to not only the United

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States, but to the world.

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We're talking about a month, but we're really talking about a lifetime.

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My motivation to work at NASA was basically a dream.

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In the past ten years, I've worked on the Thin Disc Laser, I've worked on ECLSS

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I've worked on RATT.

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The Robotics Automated Target Transporter was a lidar sensor that was in a 1000-foot

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tunnel and we used that for sensor testing.

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That tunnel is one of the tunnels that was used back in the Apollo days.

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One of the things that we have here at Marshall Space Flight Center, we have an array of vacuum

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chambers.

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When your qualifying test articles, you go extreme conditions because your looking for

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those critical temperatures because you really want to know how this piece of equipment will

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withstand the rigor that you're gong to put it through.

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One of the influences of my life was my cousin, who was a physics major.

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My mom and dad didn't go to college.

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But they thought it was essential, it was vital, it was very important for me.

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My advice to the younger generation, study as much science and math as you can.

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Physics is something that you have to deal with in everyday life.

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Math is something that you can't avoid.

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If somebody tells you, "Don't worry about this, take the easiest course that you can

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00:02:06,960 --> 00:02:11,180

take," they're not really doing you a favor.

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I mean, I work with people of all races and you find out everybody has a struggle.