

OSU/NASA Education Projects: Aerospace Education Services Program (AESP) Archive

Oklahoma State University-Stillwater, Oklahoma

Personal History of Spacemobile by Katrina Robinson. Written 2001.

Personal History of Spacemobile
by Katrina Robinson

I joined the NASA/AESP/UCEP team in the fall of 1996. The UCEP team consisted of Dr. Joe Martel, Octavia Tripp, Randy Hunt, Hector Vasquez, Marisa Delci and me, Katrina Robinson. My first year as an Aerospace Education Specialist was challenging because I was learning the material, shadowing different specialists and learning how to drive my spacemobile. Throughout my career as an Urban Community Enrichment Program (UCEP) specialist, the team changed as a result of the death of our beloved Coordinator, Dr. Joe Herman Martel. Also, Randy Hunt chose to leave the team and a search was set about to find replacements for him. After Octavia Tripp received her doctorate degree, she took over as the Coordinator of the UCEP team for the rest of my career with the AESP program, which ended on May 31, 2000. Also when I came aboard in 1996, Dr. Kenneth Wiggins was the Director of the NASA/AESP program and Dr. Steve Marks was the Associate Director. Dr. Wiggins chose to retire after many successful years with the program and Dr. Steve Marks became the Director of the NASA/AESP program and Dr. Doris Grigsby became the Associate Director.

I feel that the Spacemobile and NASA education has left a very positive legacy on the American youth by inspiring their inquisitive minds, creating learning opportunities and enlightening their minds. I strongly feel that the UCEP team met the above criteria. Having the opportunity to go into the classrooms and give instruction on one of the five enterprises was the best part of my day. I enjoyed sharing, teaching, and conducting experiments with students and adults. I am appreciative to have been a part of shaping the American youths' educational experience. The skills I acquired and honed as an Aerospace Education Specialist have given me opportunities to review many career choices. Currently, I am considering the position of Head Science Coordinator of the Lower School at one of Maryland's most elite private schools.

Finally, I would like to share my AESP/UCEP anecdote. I was scheduled to do my very first stage presentation. Octavia had come to town to observe me. The morning of my presentation, Hector surprised me by bringing the video camera and they both accompanied me to the school. After I had set up all of my models, I looked up and saw Marisa Delci had come to offer her support. Well, needless to say, I was extremely nervous because all of my colleagues were there! When I started my presentation I forgot everything I wanted to tell the students. I couldn't remember anything. I finally stammered. "My name is Katrina Robinson and I am a representative of Nabisco, no Norelco, no, no...I mean NASA!" I was mortified and I just stopped and tried to remember the names of the models and why I was there in the first place. Fortunately, Octavia came to my rescue and informed the audience that I was new to the program and that this was my first public presentation. She completed my presentation for me and allowed me to sit down. Well, I am very happy to say that I did redeem myself and the rest, as they say, is history. I wish the NASA/AESP program continued success and I am so happy to have been a part of a great organization and a wonderful university.

