Mr. Speaker, permit me to tell you more about the success story that is East Tech High School. Today, students run to their math and science classes, and many work hard to obtain the 3.00 Grade Point Average necessary to become involved with the FIRST program. All twelve members of the initial FIRST team have graduated and are now enrolled in four year engineering programs at university levels. East Tech High School is the epitome of a phoenix rising from the ashes, considering it was scheduled for closing those short five years ago.

The East Tech Student Engineering/FIRST Team currently has 40 members. It was this team that recently finished 9th out of 150 teams at the National Science and Math Competition in Orlando, Florida. And it is this team, selected from 200 other teams, to have their Robotics team along with eleven other teams from across the country, participate in the robotics competition this week on Capitol Hill.

East Technical High School, along with the aid of the NASA/Lewis Research Center who introduced FIRST to the School, has sparked the intelligence in these students that came so close to being extinguished with the slated closing of their high school. This team is indicative of the talents that lie beneath the surface of many young people in urban environments who never receive a chance or get the impact of a program like FIRST.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to share stories of programs like FIRST that exist and get our young people involved in the fields of math and science. In fact, I am now told that more students try out for East Tech’s FIRST team than they do for basketball and football combined. This program was the spark, but I feel that the students in East Technical High School had it in them all along. These students need to be commended today for the perseverance and hard work they have shown. I am sure these students have even more success awaiting them in the future.

Thank you Mr. Speaker for allowing me the opportunity to share this special success story with my colleagues. Once again, I would like to congratulate the students of East Technical High School for their achievements and for a job well done.

EAST TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL MEMBERS

Orlando Antongiorgi, Michael Bors, Kaisheila Brown, Jaria Chatmon, Rita Gream, Sha'Lawnwa Griffe, Bresha James, Aja Maxwell, Mario Mendes, Drew Odum, Kanita Parra, Khadijah Qadaar, Shakhia Shields, Sierra Smith, Christi Sutton, Sophia Syed, Bobby Vannoy, Sharonda Whatley, and Tiffany Neal.

EAST TECHNICAL FACULTY TEAM MEMBERS

J an Berlin, Sarah Broadnax, Terry Butler, Mary Carter, and Jerome Seppelt.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES

Donald Campbell, Director, J oan Charles-ton, Alicia Gonzalez, Larry Greer, J ohn Hairston, Dan Kocka, and Mary Palumbo.

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