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To the stars and beyond

WCTC students to visit Stennis Space Center

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WAUKESHA — Two Waukesha County Technical College students are getting a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit John C. Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. Thanks to the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars program, Kalila Master, an electrical engineering technology student, and Telemachos Agoudemos, a mechanical engineering technology student, will get to see how some of the most advanced technology and programs in the country work. They have already been training for weeks via an online five-week course that consists of webinars with NASA scientists and interaction with the 152 NCAS participants

across the country. Master and Agoudemos completed this activity in the fall, earning high scores, and were asked to participate in phase two — the NCAS onsite experience.

“It (mechanical engineering) was always something I wanted to do, even from being a little boy,” said Agoudemos. “I wanted to be a mechanic. When I got out of the Army, I sort of pursued the field, but there’s just always something that’s in the cards.”

Agoudemos says especially now with what’s happening with the company Space X and the commercialization of spacecraft/rockets, he is more interested in the area than ever. A non-traditional student at the age of 43, he hopes to narrow down what area of mechanical engineering he wants to



Photos courtesy of Waukesha County Technical College

Kalila Master, an electrical engineering technology student at WCTC, will attend a unique NASA program at John C. Stennis Space Center in Mississippi next week.



Telemachos Agoudemos, a mechanical engineering technology student at WCTC, is looking forward to learning about jet propulsion at a NASA college program at John C. Stennis Space Center in Mississippi next week.

pursue and set a good example for his young daughters. He has high hopes for what he will learn at Stennis Space Center.

“Stennis is where they do most of the jet propulsion, so I think it’d be really cool to see what’s entailed in that,” said Agoudemos. “Engineering has many facets to it. I’m kind of hoping to just find a center as to what I’m most interested in. I know my potential is there, I just need to find the right area.”

While at the space center from Feb. 20-23, Agoudemos and Master will work on a

group project mentored by NASA engineers, attend briefings led by engineers and scientists and tour NASA facilities. Attendees will form teams and establish a fictional company that is interested in Mars exploration, and each team will be responsible for creating and testing a prototype rover, forming a company infrastructure, managing a budget, and developing communications and outreach.

Kalila Master says she is looking forward to connecting with peers interested in the same career field as she.

She also has an interest in business/management and wants to incorporate that into her life.

“I’m hoping to take away (how it is) working with people in a group,” said Master. “We’ll have to build our own version of a module robot. It’ll be interesting to have a mini company for a while.”

Master is interested in becoming a design engineer or a project manager. She says she’d love to work at a place like NASA. She has already learned a great deal from the online portion of the program, including

acoustical engineering in relation to airplanes, more about the international space center and what NASA is doing with programming to Mars.

“It was all just really interesting,” said Master. “I’ve learned so much already.”

Master and Agoudemos are the first WCTC students to attend the NCAS program. The program is funded through NASA’s Minority University Research and Education Project and offered specifically to community college students in the STEM fields.