

Brooklyn High School Students "Meet the Builders" at the NY City Department of Design and Construction

Long Island City, NY - On March 29th, thirty 11th and 12th graders from Brooklyn Generation School visited the New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) today for a "Meet the Builders" event featuring engineering exercises and discussions with three DDC professionals who complete public buildings and infrastructure projects throughout the City.

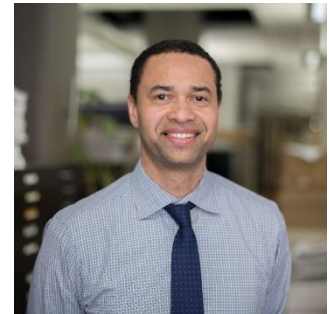
Breaking out into groups of five or six, the students completed a "Rapid Engineering" challenge designed to enhance their ability to work together, think quickly, and communicate, in which they competed to see which group could build the tallest tower using just notecards, scissors and tape.



The students then had an opportunity in a panel discussion to question DDC professionals about projects they have worked on, their interests, career goals, and experiences in technically oriented fields at DDC. The professionals offered their advice on how the students could pursue similar career tracks, and the rewards and tests they could expect along the way.

"There are excellent opportunities in the STEAM fields and we encourage students who participated today to consider careers in engineering, design, and architecture," said DDC Commissioner Feniosky Peña-Mora. "DDC's new STEAM curriculum is a tool we have developed to help students from every neighborhood unlock their potential. Soon, some of the students we hosted today may build the resilient and sustainable projects the City needs for its future."

"Today's session is about exposing students to new options, bringing non-traditional resources into the classroom, and showing them different trajectories to success," said Claude Aska, East Coast Director for the non-profit Generations Schools Network. "This semester the school is focusing on engineering and architecture professions and we want to show students why these fields are important, and why the math they learn in school is important. Now they've met people who use math in their everyday lives to improve the neighborhoods they live in. Hopefully this leads students to develop new aspirations."



Tavon Pugh is a senior at Brooklyn Generation School who lives in Brownsville and who wants to someday own his own construction business. "I saw careers today that are fun and that I know I can go on to study in college. It was great to hear [the DDC employees'] experiences and how they started their careers, and how their love for it helps them be better at what they do. Seeing these people makes me want to look for internships so I can be around more people like them," he said.

The "Meet the Builders" event is in conjunction with the DDC's STEAM education initiative. Commissioner Peña-Mora started STEAM to establish a diverse and inclusive pipeline for New York City's youth to engage in the architecture, construction, and engineering industries. STEAM programs for students grade 6 - 12 include the Young Engineers Program and the ACE Mentor Program. STEAM also offers high school and college summer internships. Overall, DDC STEAM has served more than 1,400 students since its inception in 2014.