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## Society of Manufacturing Engineers

### Hampton Roads Chapter 217



# Career Days 2008 at NASA Langley AFB



**Attended by Ray Sperle & John Edwards**



NASA Langley Career Days is sponsored by the Peninsula Engineers Council in conjunction with NASA to provide an opportunity for students to explore technical careers as engineers, scientists, and mathematicians. It's also designed to reinforce and broaden a student's career objectives.



The event was held on February 20 & 21, 2008 at Langley AFB, VA, and ran from 10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon on each day. The high schools in attendance were I.C. Norcom, Ocean Lakes, Tallwood, Menchville, Norfolk Christian, Chesapeake Center, Hampton Christian, Charles City, Denbigh, Heritage, Calvary Christian, Norview, Southampton and Windsor High School, providing a total attendance of 598 students (241 on the first day and 357 on the second), plus 2 – 3 counselors from each school.

Two guest speakers, Erica Alston, a Computer Scientist with NASA LaRC, and the 2008 Doug Ensor Award – AIAA winner Jill Prince, also of NASA LaRC, along with the keynote speaker, Kevin O. Topp, 2008 Peninsula Engineer of the Year, PEC, were scheduled during the first hour. During the second hour, students were encouraged to walk among the 20 exhibitor's booths (13 local engineering organizations and 7 NASA exhibitors) and talk with the representatives.

The booth for the Society of Manufacturing Engineers, Hampton Roads Chapter 217, was represented by John Edwards (2008 Secretary) and Ray Sperle (Past Chair). We had a continuous flow of students with a variety of questions from “What is a Manufacturing Engineer?” to “What scholarships were available?” Some students were more interested in the trinkets and handouts, smiled and moved on with their “goodies.” One of the booths offered a simple “hands-on” project, such as making bracelet using beads that change color when exposed to UV light. What we did realize on that first day was the table with the best candy attracted the most students. John rectified that...on the second day and we were far more active.



All in all, the event was enjoyable and very successful. Our high school students walked away with a better understanding of engineering and how it could fit in their future, and we had the opportunity to meet some of the future engineers who will be picking up the baton we pass along.

