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BLACK IN PHYSICS

When you have a black person who is from modern time, you feel like they are more connected to you and your backstory. You can look at a tv and see an in color picture of them or hear them tell a story about a current event that you can relate to and that is a wonderful feeling. When I see Neil deGrasse Tyson, I feel so proud and motivated to strive for my goals, even though I know they are difficult. Neil deGrasse Tyson is an Astrophysicist, an author, television producer, podcast host, philanthropist, and a pop culture icon.

I am going to be an Astrophysicist who also travels with astronauts to other planets and collect my own research instead of getting it from astronauts who come back with data. I plan to be more hands on than a lot of other physicists. Hopefully, my approach will inspire other astronauts to dive deeper into their roles. Can you imagine being able to talk about the planets to an audience in real time? I am going to be the first scientist to travel out of space and speak from my own experience! Seeing Mr. Tyson's brown skin reminds me that some of my goals have already been accomplished to some extent. There are always more ideas that can come from his work and I intend to carry that torch when the time comes for me. I know that representation matters and when I see him I know that I can also succeed in this field.

It is impressive to see Mr. Tyson owning his genius and not being ashamed or giving into peer pressure to be like other people. Whether it's in movies or on tv, he is a well rounded person. Not only is he extremely smart, but he is down to earth (see what I did there?) and has a great sense of humor. I

love to see him laugh at himself on talk shows and just have fun. He is a positive influence for so many kids and maybe even adults who don't "fit in." He's also a great reminder that we should all be ourselves and that it is not necessary to try to be like everyone else. We're all different in our own way and that's what makes us human and awesome.

He changed the way people thought about the solar system. As a scientist, you are always researching and challenging old discoveries. But it takes so much courage to decide to tell the world that your research suggests we no longer include Pluto as a major planet. I cannot imagine having that kind of courage, but if my research is correct and my team has done the work, I would hope to feel that confident.

When I heard that he graduated from three universities, it motivated me to get up and study harder. I am already planning to take college courses while in high school. I'll get a full scholarship to college and I'll continue with school until I've earned my Ph.D. I knew what a Ph.D. was, but until I heard about Dr. Tyson, I had never seen a black astrophysicist. As much as I respect and treasure him, I don't want to be the next Neil deGrasse Tyson, I want to be the best Samuel Herrera I can be, and I know that education is going to be a big part of getting me there.

It is empowering to see a black person already making a path for me in this field. Because of his work, I have made changes to my daily life to be better to the planet. I haven't used a plastic bottle in my home in over a year and I am serious about recycling. My brother and I are designing an electric pickup truck with all the modern day conveniences and NASA rover balancing technology that will help the planet while also being affordable and accessible to many families. In addition to the astrophysics portion of space exploration, I would also like to design and deploy a few NASA rovers and space telescopes.

I hope you enjoy and approve of this essay. Writing it out made me feel proud and I am pleased with how it came out. Thank you for your consideration and for opening up this contest. I hope to do more work for your organization. If I win, I plan to save this cash prize for my college education.