



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

Allison Fore

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6633

allison.fore@mwrdd.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

March 13, 2017

## MWRD uses hands-on demonstrations to educate sixth graders on STEM careers at the Museum of Science and Industry



*Tiffany Poole, MWRD environmental chemist, shows sixth grade students from Lawndale Elementary Community Academy and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Paideia Academy how to conduct experiments as Commissioner Kari Steele (in the background), parents and museum staff look on during the Museum of Science and Industry's (MSI's) Black Creativity Jr. Science Café.*



*MWRD Commissioner Kari Steele explains her educational background and experience to the students at the Museum of Science and Industry.*

Sixth grade students from Lawndale Elementary Community Academy and Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Paideia Academy visited MWRD staff at the Museum of Science and Industry's (MSI's) Black Creativity Jr. Science Café program designed to expose underserved communities to various Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) careers.

MWRD Commissioner Kari Steele explained her background as a chemist and provided an overview of the purpose of water reclamation and the role of the MWRD in cleaning water. Microbiologist Auralene Toni Glymph and chemist Tiffany Poole gave hands-on demonstrations.

Glymph presented an overview of the wastewater treatment process and the role of microorganisms

in treating the wastewater. She showed examples of microorganisms commonly observed in the treatment system and allowed the junior scientists to look at microbes using the microscope.

"The students were excited to scan the slide under the microscope in search of living microorganisms," said Glymph. "They were fascinated to see how many different types of microorganisms can be seen in a single drop."

"I know how much of a positive impact presentations can have on young students," said Commissioner Steele. "Hands-on experience is an exciting way to give students a fun window into the fascinating world of science. My goal at events like these is to share my love for science and hopefully encourage a student to consider a STEM career in the process." *(continued)*

## MWRD uses hands-on demonstrations to educate sixth graders *(continued)*



MWRD microbiologist Auralene Toni Glymph shows students examples of microorganisms commonly observed in the treatment system before allowing junior scientists the opportunity to look at microbes using the microscope.



MWRD Commissioner Kari Steele explains her experience as a student, chemist and Commissioner.



Commissioner Steele helps a student prepare to conduct an experiment.



(L-R) MWRD environmental chemist Tiffany Poole, Commissioner Kari Steele, MSI special programs coordinator Mandy Bobrow, and microbiologist Auralene Toni Glymph.

Poole presented information about lab safety, teaching the students how to use the disposable gloves and safety goggles they were given to perform experiments. Poole explained why certain Quality Assurance/Quality Control tests are completed, and described pH, dissolved oxygen (DO), ammonia and nitrate. The students experimented with determining the pH, DO, and ammonia in water samples using a quick response sampling kit. The students were able to observe the actual instruments used to complete analyses.

“I am very pleased with the outcome of this experience,” said Poole. “The students were engaged and excited to work with their hands.”

“We are so excited to have a commissioner, a microbiologist and an environmental chemist inspire students about STEM careers,” said Mandy Bobrow, MSI Special Programs Coordinator. “Making science accessible, relevant and fun is what the Jr. Science Café program is all about.”

###

### Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrd.org](http://www.mwrd.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.