

Brittani Sims: System Engineering and Integration Expert

A young girl, curled up on her couch, watches a news report on the return of NASA's space shuttle. Amazed, she tells her mom about how NASA sent people into space. The next day at school, she eagerly told her teachers and friends about how she wanted to work for NASA as an engineer and keep people safe on missions. None of them believed that she, a girl from a small town in the New Jersey suburbs, could ever work for something as big as NASA, but she was undaunted by their skepticism. In fact, she was more motivated than ever to prove them wrong. This is how Brittani Sims was first inspired to become NASA's system engineering expert.

Brittani Sims inspires me because she came from a small town in New Jersey. It seemed impossible that she could get to where she is now. She believes that "The work we are doing today is an opportunity to inspire the little girl who's sitting on the couch watching television that she can do something great." In other words, she believes that anyone can achieve their dreams if they work hard enough.

As a junior in college, she applied NASA's Motivating Undergraduates in Science and Technology or MUST program. She felt that she did important work in the program. After she got a degree at Morgan State University, she was hired full time at NASA. Starting as a surveillance project engineer for the space shuttle, she began a system engineering and integration expert for NASA at Kennedy Space Center in Florida. I would like to meet Brittany. If I met her, I would ask about how she originally worked through the doubt that her teachers and friends threw at her. Even her teacher could not believe that she could ever make it as far as NASA. If teachers can't even motivate their students to do what they want in life, it can seem impossible to get where you want to be. I'd like to know and be more like her in how she used the struggle to push her forward rather than hold her back.

Even though she began as a little girl, watching awestruck as she first learned what NASA did, through determination and working hard, she eventually achieved her original goals.