Uriah Gilmore loved to take electric appliances apart when he was growing up. “I couldn’t always get them back together,” he admits, “but I was so curious I couldn’t help myself. I just had to see how they worked.” Fortunately, Uriah’s parents supported his curiosity.

Uriah and his fellow teammates from Cleveland, Ohio’s East Technical High School recently won first place at the National High School Robotics Tournament at Epcot Center in Orlando, Florida for building a robot. “We were counseled along the way by engineers from NASA,” he enthusiastically explains. “We called our robot Froggy and painted it green,” Uriah continues, “and we used noisemakers so it even sounded like a frog.” During the final contest “Froggy” was put in a pit with two other robots and had to place balls of a certain color in a specified area. The robot who got the most balls in won the contest.

“In my sophomore year the school I was attending closed and I went to East Technical High School which was the best thing that happened to me.” He entered the engineering program and became a member of the engineering team—a team that is more popular than any sports team in his school.

Uriah attended Morehouse College on a NASA scholarship. “But,” he states, “it’s not enough to be a good student. You also have to be involved with your school and your community.” Uriah once led a march on the Cleveland, Ohio, City Hall to protest a law which threatened to fire certain teachers, including one who inspired Uriah and was responsible for the revitalization of East Technical High School.

“My ultimate goal is to travel in space and explore the galaxy,” he states. A shorter term goal is to be as involved in college as he has been in high school.