

Pamela Bradford Green



Pamela Bradford Green was born at home to James and Elizabeth Bradford in rural Mississippi where her grandparents were sharecroppers. In 1974, her parents moved the family to Wichita in search of a better life and job opportunities.

She was a TRIO Upward Bound Wichita Prep participant from 1985-1990 where she represented the program at several state conferences. She enjoyed participating in after school tutoring sessions, Saturday sessions, and the summer components. She was selected as mistress of ceremonies for three talent shows. Green graduated from Wichita East High School in 1990 and was awarded the Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship.

After completing two years at Wichita State, Bradford Green decided to transfer to Newman University where she graduated with honors in 1994, majoring in elementary education. At the time, she was the first person in her immediate family to graduate from college.

Bradford Green is currently a 23-year veteran elementary school teacher in the Wichita public school system. She has taught pre-K, kindergarten, and first through fifth grades. In addition to teaching, she has served as elementary grade level chair, school age program para, school age program assistant director, school age program director, district trainer of trainers, transportation monitor, cooperating teacher, mentor teacher, site technology specialist, leadership team, after school program tutor, summer school teacher, safety patrol, yearbook coordinator, and AVID elementary classroom teacher. She also serves as the youth director and secretary at her church.

Phuoc Thai



Fuel technology is Aerospace Engineer Phuoc Thai's current research focus at NASA's John H. Glenn Research Center at Lewis Field in Cleveland, OH. Thai's research could lead to the development of fueling stations in space, a first step toward long-term human exploration missions beyond low Earth orbit. Thai's area of expertise is in microgravity behavior.

As a youth, Thai remembers desperately wanting an education. However, he did not want one provided by the communist regime in Vietnam where life was difficult for his family. He vividly recalls seeing video footage of a man walking on the moon in the home of a family member who had the only black-and-white TV in the village. "I was so excited," Thai says, "I said, 'one day I'll work for that company.'"

After migrating to Wichita, Thai was selected for the Upward Bound Wichita Prep program. The experience and motivation he received from UB inspired his future educational and career accomplishments. Thai holds an electrical engineering degree from Wichita State and a master's degree in computer systems from Cleveland State University. He landed his dream job at NASA after graduating from Wichita State in 1990. Soon, he will celebrate 25 years working as a NASA researcher.

In 2005, Thai was NASA's on-loan executive to the United Way where he has helped raise funds for area charities. "I was proud," Thai says, "to help the really needy in the city." Last March, Thai proudly greeted and cheered on the Shockers men's basketball team in the NCAA basketball tournament in Dayton, OH.