

## Seneca Middle School's Women-in-Charge

# Journey to Success



Seneca Middle School's Women-in-Charge, a program designed to expose middle school girls to careers in math science and technology, left on a charter bus for the Kennedy Space Center and EPCOT in Disney World on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Thirty four girls, eight parent chaperons, Deborah Belflower, Seneca Middle School science teacher and founder of the Seneca program, and Delaine Childress, Seneca Middle School social studies teacher and tour guide for the trip, began their adventure at the Kennedy Space Center.

Highlights of the space center included the Saturn Five Center, viewing the actual space shuttle and seeing memorials to the astronauts who gave their lives for space exploration. Some girls actually talked with astronauts and engineers on site. Before the trip Mrs. Childress had taught the girls about the history of the space program and the impact on technology today. Having this background before the trip

gave the greater meaning to the exhibits the girls toured. Later that night, the group traveled to Disney Springs for dinner and shopping.

The second day was spent in Disney World at EPCOT. Girls soared over the globe in a hang glider looking down at polar bears, whales jumping out of the water, elephants roaring free and the Great Wall of China. After soaring over the land, a tour through the agricultural exhibit taught girls about sustainable high tech horticulture. In the Finding Nemo exhibit they learned about the Manatee rescue program and some girls talked with a scientist about endangered turtles in "Turtle Talks". In the Mission Space exhibit the girls fulfilled their fantasy of being an astronaut as they were in a space capsule dodging meteors as they were slingshot around the moon. Thanks to Erin Lee, a parent chaperon, the girls talked with a dancer from Disney World one on one about

going to college and working for Disney. The World Showcase exposed the girls to the food and culture of eleven different countries including Mexico, China, Japan and Norway, where the exhibit Frozen caught their eye.

The two day trip exposed the girls to many life lessons; checking in and out of a hotel, having a certain amount of cash each day to buy gifts and eat during the day, how to purchase fast passes using a Disney app, and how to get along with 33 other girls for ten hours in a charter bus on the way home when everyone was tired.

A special thanks goes out to the parent chaperons, Uka Billups, Heather Barton, Kelly Cox, Elizabeth Sposato, Eryn Lee, Ana Washington, Mary Wriston, and Kyleen Smith without whom Women in Charge could not have made the trip.