

# Local High-School Students Inspired by Disney Sports Business Panel as Part of MEAC/SWAC Challenge Activities

**LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., Aug. 29, 2013** - More than 900 local high school students were inspired to work hard, follow their dreams and never give up at the ESPN 101 High School Career Panel, the first of multiple events leading up to the 9<sup>th</sup> annual MEAC/SWAC Challenge presented by Disney. Sports business professionals shared their career experiences and achievements during the panel and answered questions from students.

For the past six years, Walt Disney World Resort has supported diversity, community, and higher education through the sponsorship of the MEAC/SWAC Challenge. The high school career panel and activities leading up to the MEAC/SWAC Challenge combined, make it more than just a game.

This year, the ESPN 101 panelists included representatives from the Orlando Magic, ESPN, Walt Disney World Resort, University of Central Florida, and the Amateur Athletic Union.. ESPN SportsCenter anchor Jay Harris moderated the panel.

Latonya Johnson, who played basketball for the University of Central Florida and is now a sports event manager at Walt Disney World Resort, told the students pursuing a career in sports is the next best thing to playing in front of thousands of fans.

"I hope the students stay focused on their goals, make academics a top priority and maintain positive relationships," Johnson said. Johnson's Disney career began with an internship and has included leadership roles in sports and operations.

The students from Evans High School in Orange County were excited about the program and the opportunity to ask career questions.

Quanice Cohen, a senior, said she wanted "insight on what I'll be dealing with in the future, which is pursuing sports medicine."

Other activities during the weekend celebration of diversity and education include a pep rally at Downtown Disney, a band performance at Epcot, a reception honoring Historically Black College and University legends, the Great Heart & Soul Tailgate and the football game.