

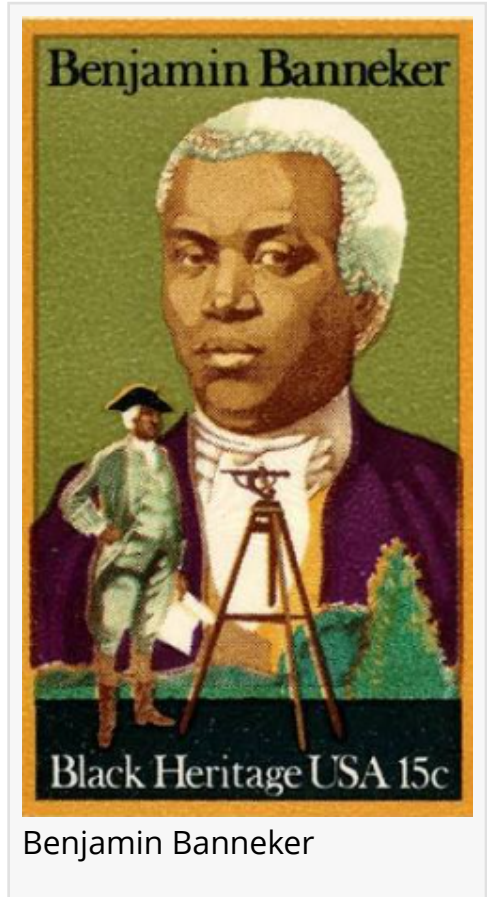
On the Anniversary of Benjamin Banneker's Death, the Black Student Fund Recommits to Math Literacy

Two centuries after Benjamin Banneker's death, the Black Student Fund (BSF) is teaching local teens the mathematics behind the technology reshaping their world.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On the Anniversary of Benjamin Banneker's Death, Black Student Fund Brings Math to the Machine Learning Era

Washington, D.C. - Two centuries after Benjamin Banneker's death, the Black Student Fund ([BSF](#)) is teaching local teens the mathematics behind the technology reshaping their world.

Benjamin Banneker, the self-taught mathematician and astronomer, died on October 9, 1806. Born free in Maryland in 1731, he became one of the first prominent Black American scientists. In 1791, he assisted surveyor Andrew Ellicott in laying out the boundaries of the new federal territory that became Washington, D.C. From 1792 to 1797, he published almanacs built on his own astronomical calculations.



That legacy of rigorous, self-driven math is the inspiration for BSF's work today. Based in the District, the nonprofit says its programs have served more than 5,000 students across roughly 90 schools in the D.C., Maryland and Virginia area.

During the summer of 2027, BSF is offering [Math for Machine Learning](#), a four-week class for high school students. Rather than focusing on coding, the course teaches the mathematics that makes machine learning work:

- Week 1: Linear Algebra. Vectors and matrices, and how computers represent images, text and data as lists of numbers.
- Week 2: Calculus. Derivatives and gradients, and how a model "learns" by gradually adjusting itself to reduce error.
- Week 3: Probability and Statistics. Averages, variation, and uncertainty, and how models make

predictions from imperfect data.

- Week 4: Putting It Together. Students combine these ideas to see how a simple model, such as a line of best fit or a basic neural network, learns from examples.

BSF notes that as artificial intelligence changes the technology workforce, a strong foundation in these subjects will matter more, not less.

"Math literacy is the lifeblood of machine learning, and machine learning is the future," said Leroy Nesbitt, Executive Director, Black Student Fund.

The class builds on BSF's broader math offerings. This summer, the Conchita Poole Math Circle ran a free, six-week remote Math Summer Boost Program for middle schoolers from 19 regional schools, while younger students used the prototype [Tantalus BSF Math Arcade](#), a game-based platform created by BSF's STEM Director. BSF also supports SAT math prep and has entered student teams in the MathCounts National Student Video Competition.

Banneker, who calculated planetary positions by hand, would recognize the spirit of the work: curiosity, precision and persistence.

For more information, contact BSF at mail@blackstudentfund.org or (202) 387-1414.



Leroy Nesbitt, Executive Director of BSF



Tantalus



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*Leroy Nesbitt, Executive
Director, BSF*

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