

Have You Heard?

The 2018 Superstars in Education award winning program S3 STEM Summer Scholars has added several exciting new activities for students to explore this summer. At the middle school level participants will be introduced to forensics and drones while elementary students will work with catapults.

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Launched in the summer of 2011, the STEM program was created to provide participating students the experience of applying the principles of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) to solve real world problems in a carefully structured environment. Students work with technology and/or math and science teachers to design, create and test a variety of engineering projects. Parents are invited at the end of each week and students present their projects, explaining the processes they used to create their final product.

This summer, rising 7th, 8th and 9th grade students will be introduced to forensics and work like detectives using fingerprints to solve crimes and mysteries. In addition they will learn how to program drones to perform a series of tasks. Also new for middle schoolers this year is "Science of Science Fiction", an activity where students read science fiction stories and create a model of an element from that story, obeying the laws of science as they assemble their structure.

Elementary students will add the building and launching of catapults to their curriculum for this summer.

Currently 337 students have enrolled for at least one of the weeklong sessions. Classes are held Monday through Thursday at Dickinson High School with middle school sessions starting on July 9th and elementary students on July 16th. The last day for both STEM programs is July 26th.

Students in the STEM Summer Scholars program will develop team building, planning and communication skills as they prepare to meet the rigor of the high school STEM expectations that will challenge them in upcoming years. The theme of the program is Making the World a Better Place and students are not only encouraged to consider a career in the sciences, but inspired to use science as a way to solve world problems.

Each year hundreds of students look forward to participating in the Summer Scholars program. More girls have enrolled in the program since adopting the new theme. In addition, the number of students with identified disabilities has increased.

Eddie McGrath, Red Clay Science Supervisor and coordinator of the STEM program said he makes an effort to hire female teachers to teach sessions. "Research has shown that students are more likely to go into STEM careers if they see someone that looks like them who is successful in STEM careers," McGrath explained. "Our program is designed for all students who are curious about the sciences, it allows them to explore a subject without the onus of grades." He added, "The STEM Summer Scholars program is entering its eighth year, and always amazes me. We see students of all ability and interest levels apply, many for several consecutive years, and they all come away with a positive outlook. It's encouraging to see siblings of former students come to summer STEM. I truly believe that in a small way, this program and others like it make the world a better place."