Sept. 10, 2013

Girls can register now for Expanding Your Horizons

The sixth Expanding Your Horizons conference, which introduces girls to the idea of education and careers in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) disciplines, is 9 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 12, at Sacramento State.

The one-day conference is open to 500 girls – twice as many as in the past – in sixth through eighth grades. Registration is under way for both Expanding Your Horizons and the Parents Program, held concurrently for the moms, dads and guardians of girls attending the conference.

Registration for both events is $30 per person, and includes lunch. Call (916) 278-4433 or (800) 858-7743, or go to http://bit.ly/19M6z0M.

In addition to hearing from keynote speaker Allison Goodman, a senior systems engineer at Intel, the girls will be able to choose from 32 compelling, hands-on workshops led by faculty and/or students from Sacramento State, Sacramento City College, CSU Chico, American River College and UC Davis, along with representatives of the Discovery Museum & Space Center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Also leading workshops are industry professionals from Stantec, SMUD, Aerojet Rocketdyne, Monsanto, Delta Blood Bank and Kaiser Permanente.

“I think the students look forward to our workshops because they want to get their hands dirty and see something explode,” says Cynthia Kellen-Yuen, one of the Sac State chemistry professors who are helping the Chemistry Club present the “Glowing Chemistry” workshop. “The girls have a fun time, learn some interesting science, and, most importantly, get to meet and interact with our students and instructors.

“What I hope the girls take from the experience is the idea that there are people out there who love science so much that they can't help but share it, and that the process can be a lot of fun. With luck, this plants the seed that they may want a career that involves science,” she says.

Here are a few of the Expanding Your Horizons workshops:

• “Bone Detectives” – Using skeletal casts to understand how forensic anthropologists determine the sex and age of skeletons.
• “What Color is Green” – Separating the chemical components in M&Ms by a process called chromatography.
• “Build a Heart Monitor” – Learning how to make a miniature electronic-circuit heart monitor.
• “Fuel from French Fries, Coffee and Nuts: Biodiesel” – Making biofuel and testing its quality.
• “Eat Your Way to DNA” – Using a strawberry and common household products to extract a real DNA sample to take home.
• “Get Behind the Wheel” – Experiencing firsthand the dangers of texting while driving in a safe distracted-driver simulator.
• “Ice Cream Science” – Making ice cream in less than two minutes and learning the science behind it – and then touring Sac State’s newly renovated CIMERA molecular biology lab.
• “It IS Rocket Science” – Learning the basic principles of propulsion and rocket design.
• “Pediatric Nursing: What’s It Like?” – Using human simulators as “patients” to practice taking blood pressure and wrapping a baby.

“Studies show that while middle-school girls score just as well as boys in math and science, they begin to steer away from these classes. We want to show the girls that science can be ‘cool’ and fun,” says Teri Kier, the Expanding Your Horizons project manager for Women of AT&T, which is co-hosting the event with Sacramento State’s College of Continuing Education.

Additional sponsors are AT&T, Intel, Aerojet Rocketdyne, SMUD, Kaiser Permanente and the national Expanding Your Horizons Network.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Office of Public Affairs at (916) 278-6156.
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