

SIUE Odyssey Science Camp's interactive learning opportunities engage area students in STEM

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EDWARDSVILLE - Explorers, expert observers and super sleuths are energizing Southern Illinois University Edwardsville's campus during Odyssey Science Camp being held July 17-28.

Organized by the SIUE Center for STEM Research, Education and Outreach, more than 110 students, grades 2-9, are engaging in a variety of interactive activities aimed at fostering an appreciation for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

“At Odyssey Science Camp, we’re inspiring future scientists, investigators, mathematicians, engineers and more by introducing them to STEM concepts through activity-based instruction,” said Dawn Olive, with the SIUE STEM Center. “We offer students opportunities to work in a laboratory and conduct hands-on experiments that are not always possible in schools.”

Camp activities range from introducing scientific principles, building math skills, conducting simple “crime science” investigations and constructing a Lego® robot. New this year, campers are exploring renewable energy sources.



“Renewable energy is an important topic, so we thought it would be valuable for students to learn more about wind turbines, solar cells, hydroelectric turbines and hydrogen-powered vehicles through hands-on activities,” said instructor Ron Mayhew.

Students, grades 7-8, analyzed the angle of wind turbines’ blades and learned how that affects revolutions per minute (RPM). They also experimented with solar cars by testing the distance the cars traveled in relation to the amount of time they charged and weather conditions, such as cloud cover.

“I’ve been coming to camp for years,” said Allyson Lunsford, of Glen Carbon. “I like science, because there are always more answers to explore and different topics to learn.

I thought I knew all about renewable energy before camp, but this class has taught me a lot more.”

“This is my first year at Odyssey Science Camp, and I love it,” added Tyler Lintker, of Edwardsville. “When I saw that I would get to be in the renewable energy course this summer, I thought it would be the perfect fit.”

Not only is Odyssey Science Camp comprised of experienced area teachers, it is also supported by SIUE students who are participating in the Robert J. Noyce Scholarship Science and Math Grants, funded by the National Science Foundation, which provide summer scholarships for qualified STEM students interested in teaching. The SIUE summer scholars find it exciting to inspire younger STEM-motivated learners.

“I want to be a science teacher, because I enjoy kids and one of my strengths is helping others learn,” said Jenna Sanders, a rising junior majoring in biological sciences at SIUE. “This extra teaching experience is integral for my growth as a future teacher. Also, this is an important age range for keeping kids involved in STEM, because their minds are shaping.”

“It’s been great to see what the kids are interested in and help lead activities that engage them in those areas,” added Dalia Hassan, a sophomore chemistry major at SIUE. “These are smart kids. I’m excited that they’re our future!”

For more information on the SIUE STEM Center’s Odyssey Science Camp, visit siue.edu/summer/camps/odyssey-science-camp.

The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville [Center for STEM Research, Education and Outreach](http://www.siu.edu/stem) comprises an independent group of researchers and educators, innovating ways to engage students and the public in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Within the SIUE Graduate School, the Center brings together research faculty, graduate students and practitioners to conduct education research. The Center contributes educational expertise to SIUE undergraduate classes and provides professional development for K-12 teachers. The Center boasts a significant library of equipment and resources, which are available for loan at no cost to campus and regional instructors. For more information, visit <https://www.siu.edu/stem/about.shtml> or contact STEM Center Director Sharon Locke at [\(618\) 650-3065](tel:6186503065) or stemcenter@siue.edu.