

High schools compete in 8th Annual Trebuchet Competition

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GODFREY – More than 170 students from 11 area high schools will compete in Lewis and Clark's Eighth Annual Trebuchet contest on Friday, March 27 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p. m. in the George C. Terry River Bend Arena. The event is free and open for public spectators.

Trebuchets were designed and used in medieval times as a military engine for hurling heavy objects such as rocks weighing hundreds of pounds. The trebuchet typically consists of a pivoted wooden arm set in motion by the fall of weight and works by using the energy of a raised counterweight to throw a projectile.

“The competition is a fun way for students to learn more about science and technology through exploration and teamwork,” said Kevin Bodden, coordinator of engineering science at L&C. “The event fosters development of skills in measurement, report writing, critical thinking and time management – all vital for those pursuing careers in engineering and engineering technology.”

Approximately 40 teams of four to five high school students will compete with trebuchets they have designed and built using their knowledge of physical science. Instead of rocks, they will hurl rubber balls. Each team works for months, using their knowledge in basic principles of physics to plan, design, build and test their trebuchets. They will compete with each other for distance, accuracy and presentation of design.

Teams are judged on a report, which documents their efforts and results as well as the design and history of trebuchets, CAD drawings and their performance in competition.

High schools represented include: Marquette Catholic High School, East Alton-Wood River High School, Southwestern High School, Jersey Community High School, Edwardsville High School, Carrollton High School, Highland High School, Trinity Catholic High School in St. Louis, Duchesne High School in St. Charles, and Incarnate Word Academy in St. Louis.

The trebuchet contest strives to increase awareness and interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields among high school students in the St. Louis region. The contest was one of two programs at Lewis and Clark that was awarded a prestigious grant from the National Science Foundation in 2012. The grant will help Lewis and Clark expand the program over the next several years with the cooperation of other college districts, including SWIC and St. Louis Community College.

View photos from last year's competition at <http://bit.ly/lctrebuchet>, and learn more about the trebuchet contest at www.lc.edu/trebuchet.