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Williston DIG STEM Festival: Rural Kids Learn About Global Opportunities

AIKEN, S.C., May 8, 2019 – This year’s DIG (Dreams, Imagination & Gift) STEM Festival in Williston, S.C., recently saw more than 50 exhibitors working together to provide a day of fascinating hands-on learning involving a myriad of topics for over 4,000 visitors.

The event was created to showcase a multitude of local exhibitors who provide engaging activities, live performances, interactive demonstrations and family-oriented STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) entertainment featuring drone simulators, robotics, virtual reality and 3-D Printing.

Aisles and exhibits were filled with area children, teens and their families as they browsed through high tech machines and other intriguing devices found at exhibits in this science wonderland.

One clever demonstration featured musical bananas that acted as a simple keyboard. When touched, each played a specific note of music.

The day also featured STEM-based competition, inflatable play equipment, games and live music.

“It’s fun and there are a lot of cool activities,” said fifth grade



Hundreds of children and teenagers visited the Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) exhibit during the recent DIG (Dreams, Imagination & Gift) STEM Festival in Williston, S.C. Participants created a geodome out of gumdrops and toothpicks to learn that engineers use triangles to build because they are structurally the strongest shape. SRNS employee Taylor Rice assists Harper (left) and Landen Still with two of over 200 domes made by visitors.

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Chukker Creek student Caden Crapse. “My brother Chase and I built a geodome out of gum drops and tooth picks. You learn a lot using all these different machines, gadgets and robots. It’s a great way to spend a Saturday.”

Steven Brown, President and Founder of DIG, sees the success of a STEM festival in a rural area like Barnwell County as the proof that his original vision is viable. He described DIG as a tax exempt, non-profit organization whose goal is to motivate, mentor, encourage and enable rural children and youth to excel and make their dreams and imaginations a reality.

“DIG aims to establish a sense of community pride and ownership by providing an organization that gives residents an opportunity to play a major role in developing their own youth. Statistics show that when a community is involved by volunteering, residents feel secure, personally invested and tend to do more for the well-being of the community,” Brown said. “I am a firm believer that we are witnessing a cultural shift in our communities that will help ensure a better future for our residents and youth.”

“As a part of that cultural shift, we realize something big is happening in the rural communities we serve and SRNS is at the center of it,” added Brown. “SRNS has been supporting our programs and festival for four years, and we are positive that the success we’ve had over those years would not be possible without them. All things engineering-related and industry-related stems from SRNS first, and we are glad that they are partners of our STEM outreach initiatives.”

The list of exhibitors featured many well-known companies and organizations including diamond sponsors SRNS, Barnwell County Council, Town of Williston, American Zinc Recycling, Atlantic Broadband, Boeing and Collum’s Lumber; platinum sponsors Barnwell County EDC; Gold sponsors WJBF News; and Silver sponsors Shaw Industries, Tri-County Community Foundation, SRP Credit Union, Archroma, Savannah River Remediation and the Nuclear Workforce Initiative.

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