Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

6-24-2016

Rutherford County High School Students Participate in Third Annual Science Academy at GWU

Office of University Communications

Rutherford County High School Students Participate in Third Annual Science Academy at GWU

Office of University Communications

June 24, 2016

Classroom Theory and Real-World Application Explored During Weeklong Camp at GWU

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – High school students from Rutherford County, N.C., are reporting that a unique week of their summer vacation that has given them new insight into the practical application of scientific principles. Through a grant from the Stonecutter Foundation (Spindale, N.C.), a dozen area teens participated in the third annual Science Academy, a program designed to offer enrichment in the subject of science and help students solidify skills in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

"The goal of the Science Academy is to provide a rich, practical experience in science with exposure to science related careers," offered Jay Zimmer, biology instructor at Gardner-Webb. "The hope is to stimulate STEM-related industries in this region of the state. The activities centered on biotechnology and forensic science."

The camp was structured with instructional time in the morning and field trips to local organizations in the afternoon. The students, who attend Chase High School, East Rutherford High School, or Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy, spent time in classroom sessions such as lab safety, physiology lab, forensics lab, and more. During the afternoon, attendees participated in simulations on campus and traveled to Rutherford Hospital (Rutherfordton), Rutherford County Sheriff's Office Forensics Department (Rutherfordton), and Cohesion Phenomics DNA lab in Spindale.

Students agreed that combining the classroom instructional time with field trips helped solidify the concepts they were discussing. "The hands-on activities were the most interesting science experiences I have ever had," reported Katelyn Sears, a student at Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy (TJCA).

"The Science Academy has surrounded me with so much scientific knowledge that I didn't know before, and now the rest of my summer seems boring in comparison!" touted Cole Powell, also a TJCA student.

Gabriella Day, who attends East Rutherford High School, agreed. "This camp gave me the opportunity to experience things that most other high school students are unable to," Day revealed. "We were able to participate in activities that worked our minds and sparked our imaginations. This academy showed us that we are able to do anything we set our mind to."

The Stonecutter Foundation sponsored the science academies at GWU in 2014 and 2015. The foundation also funded a similar math academy for Rutherford County students in 2013 and 2014. Additional photos of the 2016 Science Academy are available here.

The Stonecutter Foundation, a non-profit established in 1945, has invested in numerous Rutherford County community institutions such as the town library and Isothermal Community College. Since its inception, the foundation has made grants totaling $7.7 million to the surrounding community.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University's purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate *(For God and Humanity).*