

Annual Report 2015 Year in Review

In the summer of 2015 our organization served over 400 students at 15 community partner organizations. We expanded our staff to 5 teacher-mentors and 17 interns. We added a cultural diversity training program, led by Dr. Rochelle Peterson, to help our interns and staff explore identity and factors that impact it in order to facilitate working collaboratively in diverse settings.



Activities during diversity training helps build teamwork, communication, and trust

We were fortunate and thankful that Tustin Recreation Center leaders permitted us to use a large multipurpose room and a storage space for our base camp. It was the perfect facility for conducting our training week and diversity workshops.

We developed several new community partnerships this summer. We entered the Germantown area, establishing partnerships with Mallery Recreation Center, Finley Recreation Center and Simons Recreation Center. We also continued to develop new relationships in West and Southwest Philadelphia, partnering with Lee Cultural Center, Wright Recreation Center, and Eastwick Recreation Center.

New Initiatives:

Since many of our teaching staff this year were math teachers, we worked to incorporate math skill building into each of our lessons. We experimented with two new programs designed to incorporate art and technology into our science/engineering programs. We especially geared these two programs to older youth such as tweens and teens. One of the



Campers use professional cameras to shoot video

programs was Film Making, taught by filmmaker Mr. Benjamin Neate. Students learned how to create their own music video. Our second program was Robotics, taught by Mr. John Winter, in which students learned how to program robots to solve a dance challenge. Both of these classes

benefitted from using Tustin Recreation Center's computer lab. Although the exhibition of the youth's final projects was exciting and well received by the other campers, there was insufficient funding to continue offering it in the future.

Curriculum:

We began to standardize our lesson formula to help our interns learn how to structure a lesson into a sequence of: engaging, exploring and making sense. We incorporated a practice lesson into the last day of our training week to give the interns the chance to practice. Our tried and true programs were Butter Making and Volcanoes for young children, and Designing Motor Boats and Ice Cream Making for all. Our new programs included Ramps and Pathways for young children, and Experimenting with Cheese Making, Panning for Gold, Kaleidoscope Design, Capturing Images with Sunprints, and Engineering Propeller Cars.



Young campers solve an engineering challenge in Ramps and Pathways

Next Steps

We continued to struggle with absences and lateness of interns causing disruption to the schedule and the team building process. We will bring onboard a person with expertise in youth guidance and development to improve this aspect of our program. Also, some of our community partners did not match our mission of providing lessons that incorporated both fun and critical thinking. Rather than compromise our goals, we will be more selective about whom we can partner with.