

A BRIGHT FUTURE STEMMING FROM Y PROGRAMS

For years, the Ivy Tech Campus in Evansville has hosted a summer camp geared toward keeping youth active and intellectually engaged during summer.

Rather than sitting around and playing video games, youth attending camp are introduced and engaged in the field of STEM. Responding to a community and larger societal need to bring more young women and minorities to the field of STEM, Ivy Tech faculty and staff approached the YMCA to partner.

Through the Ivy Tech Foundation and donors to the YMCA annual campaign, we were able to provide two weeks of free summer STEM learning experience for youth in our YMCA Youth Outreach Programs.

The primary goal is to introduce VEX Robotics to students, teaching them how to design, assemble, and then operate a VEX Robot using a mentoring model and structure.

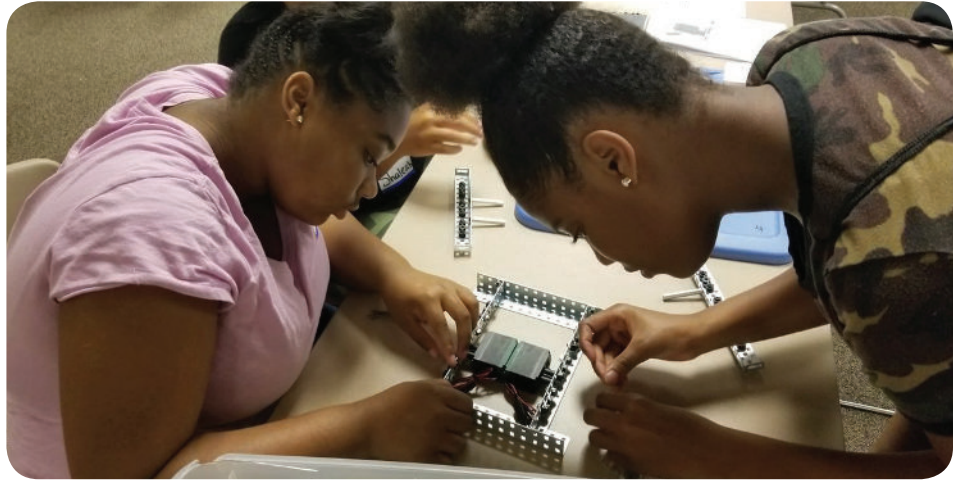
Unique to this program was a

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secondary goal of training additional teachers and mentors in our community so that more students can experience robotics in their schools. Teachers were recruited from local schools and served as mentors under the leadership of Donna Zimmerman and Craig Jefferson, faculty and staff of Ivy Tech.

Not only were the students able to learn “hands on” in the robotics laboratory where they built, tested, and analyzed data on VEX Robots, they also visited two local companies who specialize in robotic operations, SRG Global and Flanders Electric.

BELOW: Two DIAMONDS participants assemble their own VEX robot.



The students toured and learned about the practical use of robotics in our community as well as learned about the various careers they might explore in the field.

The week ended with a VEX competition, judged by volunteer engineers from Vectren Corporation who speak with the youth about additional careers in STEM at their company.

Thanks to donors like you, over 25 YMCA youth outreach participants avoided sitting around this summer

and instead had the opportunity to expand their horizons and equip themselves with knowledge and experience which not only helps them through high school but also exposes them to one of the largest growing, and well paying, employment fields of the 21st Century.

- Sean Kuykendall
Branch Director,
YMCA Community Outreach Branch



ABOVE: A USI student (who is also a Y staff member) shows a middle school-aged DIAMOND how to affix a claw to a VEX robot.



ABOVE: Camp participants visited FLANDERS to see robotics operations and career opportunities in various STEM fields.