

Girls just want to do STEM

By STEPHANIE GERTSCH

On Saturday morning, local 3rd – 5th grade girls and their moms were having a blast launching mini rockets, learning about the senses, dusting for fingerprints, building towers out of pasta, and experimenting with polymers and density. Since 1991, the Fremont branch of American Association of University Women (AAUW) has been holding “Stem Discovery Day” to introduce girls to science in a relaxed and hands-on setting. Especially in the Bay Area, STEM career opportunities are expanding, but women are still underrepresented. Stem Discovery Day is a way of communicating to children that science is for everyone regardless of gender.

Previously, the event was always held in Fremont, but this year’s February 1 event took place at Caesar Chavez Middle School in Union City. Students rotated between seven workshops, each with an activity from a different field of science. In a workshop on the five senses, kids tried to guess the flavors of gum while



blindfolded. In another, they built towers of pasta and tested them in a makeshift wind tunnel. In the popular forensic workshop, kids learned how to dust for fingerprints and then used their skills to determine which of their moms had “stolen” some chocolate and left an incriminating thumbprint behind.



PhD students from Stanford held a workshop on polymers (through studying the absorbency of diapers), and Engineering for Kids helped students build and troubleshoot mini rockets. However, the majority of workshops were hosted by local high school students who were alumni of AAUW’s Stem Trek scholarship program – a weeklong summer camp at Stanford for 7th grade girls.

Having older students give back by teaching not only helps develop leadership skills, but also shows the next round of students that they have role models to look up to. “You see [the presenters] so poised, so confident, but they all started like you,” AAUW member Letha Saldanha told the younger children. “I’ve known many of them; some of them used to attend this event, and then they joined again to start presenting.”

John Thompson, superintendent of New Haven Unified School District, also spoke at the event. A former science teacher, he was enthusiastic when Saldanha got in touch with him. He said, “One of the things I always struggled with when I was teaching science quite a few years ago was I would see these students at the school—girls—that I knew should have been in my science classes, had the potential to be scientists, and I couldn’t talk them into taking the higher level sciences.”

AAUW’s next Stem Discovery Day will be on March 21 at Walters Middle School in Fremont. Registration will be available starting in mid-February, 2020. More information can be found on the AAUW website <https://fremont-ca.aauw.net/>, and the organization can be contacted at AAUWFremontBranch@gmail.com.

NEW MEMBERS AND EMERGING ARTISTS

SUBMITTED BY WINDA SHIMIZU

Hayward Arts Council, in collaboration with Hayward Public Library, is presenting the exhibit “New Members and Emerging Artists” on the second floor of the Hayward 21st Century Library and Learning Center in downtown Hayward until March 14. Join us at the artists’ reception on Saturday, February 8.

New members Kristia Bondoc, Kimberly DeLand, Natalie Juntz, Claudine Krause, Maria Ochoa, Danika Philis, Chelsea Tikotsky, and Wenonah Washington are showing a variety of media including acrylics, pastels, photography, mixed media, recycled materials, digital print, paper art, and ink.

New Members and Emerging Artists is the second exhibit hosted by the Hayward Library. Gallery hours are Monday - Wednesday: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m., Thursday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Closed Sundays).

In addition, the Hayward Public Library is presenting the “Six by Two Exhibit,” comprised of 12 art pieces from six Hayward Arts Council members in the exhibition hall near the staircase. Artists are Richard Geiger (watercolor), Kimberly Ladewig (wool and

watercolor), Kate Hardwig (watercolor), Gerald Thompson (oil), and Patra Nesseth-Steffes (digital photography) and Loretta Siegel (acrylic).

New Members and Emerging Artists and Six by Two are sponsored by Hayward Arts Council (HAC), which stimulates interest in visual and performing arts, promotes opportunities for artists to exhibit, and encourages public participation in free art demonstrations and events. Visit www.haywardartscouncil.org for more gallery exhibits and events.

New Members and Emerging Artists
Monday, Jan 20 – Saturday, Mar 14
Mon - Wed: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Thurs - Sat: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Artists’ Reception
Saturday, Feb 8; 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Hayward 21st Century Library
888 C St., Hayward
(510) 538-2787
www.haywardartscouncil.org

