

Math, Science and Legos

Program gets kids interested in technology

BY JAKE THOMAS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Oregon Robotics Tournament Outreach Program has sought to introduce the state's youth to science and math for nearly 10 years through interactive projects that seek to harness the creativity of students.

But just until two years ago, this opportunity was largely absent for students in north and northeast Portland, until a group of volunteers stepped in to make sure that they had access to the program.

ORTOP sponsors several programs that aim to instill in kids ranged 9 through 18 an interest in engineering. In the First Lego League, a program of ORTOP, kids from all over Oregon build Lego robots to complete tasks while learning to solve problems using math, science, and technology.

Earlier this month, local students



PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Local students who participated in the First Lego League show off what they learned at Bethel AME Church in north Portland.

and volunteers who competed on the teams gathered Bethel AME Church in northeast Portland to show off what they learned from the experience.

Antonio Jackson- the head of a local branch of Kappa Alpha Psi, a fraternity that helped bring the program to the area, said that no teams placed this year, but the number of teams grew from two to five.

"It's building their foundation," said Jackson, who explained that with constant budget cutbacks in schools it's important for kids to

have opportunities for hands-on applications of math and science. "This program is so important because it's a lot of kids of color who are getting exposure to science and technology."

The younger teams, who range from ages 6 through 9, program Lego robots to perform hypothetical tasks based on real world problems. For instance, this year's teams faced challenges dealing with global transportation issues, and had to grapple with tasks like how to move goods overseas.

Detroit Picks Sue

continued from page

million to his Grant High alma mater.

He's going to a team that has won just three games since mid-way through the 2007 season.

"It doesn't bother me at all," Suh said. "I went to Nebraska when they were not coming off a very good season and our class

turned that around, winning 10 games for the first time in eight or nine years. I think I can come in and help the Detroit Lions do the same thing."

Suh was the players fans wanted, especially the few thousand cheering from Ford Field when the pick was made.

"I plan on not disappointing them at all," Suh said.



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Troops stand at attention at the Chiles Center at the University of Portland. Two hundred Oregon National Guard Soldiers came home on April 21 after serving in Iraq.

**IT'S MY CITY TOO,
SO DON'T MESS IT UP.**

YES, SHE'S TALKING TO YOU.

Because a lot can happen in 25 years. Portland will be different and today's children will be all grown up. Many of us love what Portland has to offer, especially its natural beauty and quality of life. But today we face some real challenges that impact our day-to-day lives. How we respond to them will affect the children and grandchildren of tomorrow. That's why your ideas for the Portland Plan are essential to make this a thriving and sustainable city for everyone.

Through community input in Phase One of the Portland Plan and visionPDX, we heard that education, jobs, equity, public health and sustainability are important to the people of this city. Now it's time to take the next step.

The Phase Two community workshops will focus on setting direction – identifying our goals and choosing targets that will help us meet them.

We want your input, so come to a workshop or take an online survey at www.pdxplan.com. **There's talking about it. And then there's actually doing something about it.**

PORTLAND PLAN PHASE II WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

SOUTHEAST

April 26, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
Central Catholic High School
2401 SE Stark Street

NORTHEAST

April 29, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
Beaumont Middle School
4043 NE Fremont Street

NORTH

May 1, 2010, 10am–12:30pm
University Park Community Center
9009 N Foss Avenue*

CENTRAL CITY

May 10, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
University of Oregon in Portland
70 NW Couch Street

EAST

May 15, 2010, 10am–12:30pm
David Douglas High School
1001 SE 135th Avenue*

WEST

May 18, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
Jackson Middle School
10625 SW 35th Avenue

www.PDXPlan.com | Twitter: @PDXPlan, #PDXPlan | Facebook: www.facebook.com/PDXPlan

*Childcare provided

The Portland Plan team is committed to providing equal access to information and meetings. If you need special accommodations, please notify us five (5) days prior to the event by phone at 503-823-7700, by the TTY line at 503-823-6868, or by the Oregon Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900.

City of Portland | Metro | Multnomah County | Portland Public Schools | Parkrose School District | Centennial School District | David Douglas School District | Reynolds School District | Portland State University
Oregon Health & Science University | University of Oregon | Portland Community College | Mt. Hood Community College | TriMet | Portland Development Commission | Housing Authority of Portland | Worksystems, Inc.
East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District | West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District | Multnomah County Drainage District