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Annual workshop for girls promotes math and science

By

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By Jesse Riggs Kansas State Collegian

K-State presented the 10th-annual GROW Summer Workshop last week. The three-day event for sixth- to eighth-grade girls is designed to encourage them to pursue futures in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

About 100 girls from Kansas, Missouri, Virginia and Florida attended GROW or Girls Researching Our World, forming ten teams for the duration of the event: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Theta, Nu, Pi, Rho, Sigma and Omega, each headed by K-State student mentors. GROW was presented through the efforts of K-State faculty, graduate students and undergraduates, headed by WESP (Women in Engineering and Research Program) Outreach Program Coordinator Susan Christian.

According to Christian, some 3,000 students have attended GROW events since they began in June 2000. After 10 years, follow-up surveys have shown that 45 percent of the students contacted were pursuing degrees or careers in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

Christian said she hopes the girls will leave the GROW Summer Workshop with knowledge of the broad variety of opportunities available in science and engineering and how such careers make an impact worldwide.

GROW featured a wide variety of hands-on workshops, from "Acid Raindrops Keep Falling in My Lake" and "Fun Wit Magnetism," to "In a Galaxy Far, Far Away" and "Why the Sky is Blue." A few of the activities took place on the Konza Prairie and focused on plants, animals and their ecosystems.

Among the workshops pertaining to technology was "Do You Know Who is on Your Computer?" John Homer, who completed his doctorate this past spring, led the workshop.

On Homer's computer was a file titled secret.txt, which he used to show the girls how to use command prompts to locate the file through the network and edit it from their computers.

"Computers do exactly what you tell them to," Homer told the students. "So if you give them bad direction, you get bad results."

The girls accessed the text file to discover that Homer has a son named David and a dog, and his favorite color is purple. Very quickly, Homer's favorite colors became red, blue and pink as a result of the girls editing the text, causing laughter throughout the computer lab.

Jessica Heier-Stamm, K-State graduate in industrial engineering and Ph.D. student at Georgia Tech, ran a GROW workshop on disaster relief.

After discussing the basics of supply chains and analyzing the differences between a regular supply chain and a disaster-relief supply chain, Heier-Stamm divided the girls into groups as parts of a simulated disaster relief effort. The simulation ran through a week of four-minute days, during which the girls sent order forms, assembled aid packages using Legos™ and dealt with unexpected events like flooded-out bridges and communications breakdowns.

"I can't say you did worse than FEMA," Heier-Stamm jokingly told the girls after the last relief package was shipped.

The girls then discussed how the exercise had challenged them, and Heier-Stamm elaborated on the importance of communication and needs evaluation, citing the thousands of winter coats donated and sent to tropical Sri Lanka after the tsunami of 2004: useful items for someone, but not for most Sri Lankans.

Heier-Stamm described her involvement with GROW as "very rewarding" and good motivation for her own research. This was her fourth year of contribution to the GROW Summer Workshop.

It is the hard work of graduates, like Heier-Stamm, and K-State faculty that make the GROW Summer Workshop a success, Christian said.

By Hannah Blick Kansas State Collegian

More than 146 years ago, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, formally abolishing slavery in the U.S. and birthing a nation that honors freedom for all citizens.

This weekend, the Manhattan community will remember this moment in history with the 20th edition of the area's Juneteenth celebration.

Juneteenth will start with a Gospel Fest at the Larry Norvell Band Shell in City Park from 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, said Vanessa Hope, Juneteenth chairperson.

"We just invite all the community churches to come out and sing praises to the Lord [Friday]," Hope said. "Then on Saturday morning, the parade starts at 10."

The parade route will start in the Sears parking lot on 3rd Street, continue on Poyntz Avenue and Juliette Street, and finally turn onto Yuma Street, where it will end at the Douglass Community Center at 901 Yuma St.

The rest of Saturday's events will run until 5, including historical displays housed in Douglass Center Annex and a 3-on-3 basketball tournament sponsored by U.S. Army recruiters and Flint Hills Job Corps. To sign up for the tournament, interested individuals should visit the recruiter's office in Manhattan Town Center or sign up at the Annex Saturday morning at 9 a.m.

Live music from local musicians Betti O and Muizzi will start at 1 p.m., and free hot dogs and ice cream will be provided for children 12 and under, Hope said. A previously announced barbecue cook-off has been canceled.

Mayor Bob Strawn said he will read an official proclamation and welcome the community to the event.

"Manhattan was originally founded as an anti-slavery settlement," Strawn said. "Manhattan is rich in African-American culture, and it's important that we celebrate it. It's going to be a beautiful day, come out and enjoy it with us."

All Juneteenth events are free and open to the public.

By Rico van Buskirk Kansas State Collegian

Two K-State athletics department officials remain on administrative leave a week after.

Jim Epps, deputy athletic director, and Bob Cavello, senior associate athletic director for administration and finance, were placed on administrative leave June 10.

“Earlier this afternoon, I informed Jim Epps and Bob Cavello of my decision to place them on administrative leave with pay until further notice,” said John Currie, athletic director, in the department’s press release. “This decision is not based upon any concerns about misconduct on the part of either individual. As is practice with personnel matters, we will have no further comment at this time.”

The decision came two days after Currie took over the reins of the K-State athletic department.

President Kirk Schulz said that despite rumors, the action is not part of a conscious effort to replace administrators from Jon Wefald’s presidency.

“I don’t foresee any administrative changes happening,” Schulz said. “It’s an athletic department matter.”

release, Parkinson and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation President Earl Watkins announced a comprehensive energy plan to encourage the production of more renewable energy in Kansas.

The agreement will allow Sunflower to construct one 895-megawatt (MW) coal plant, enough to power 448,000 households and generate 6.67 million tons of carbon dioxide per year, down from 10.7 million tons from the two 700 MW coal plant previously proposed.

“We’re bringing people together to create hundreds of jobs, increase our renewable energy production and ensure a comprehensive energy plan for our state,” Parkinson said in the news release. “Prior to this agreement, the legislature was at an impasse on energy issues. With this agreement, we can start to move forward.”

Recent happenings from the Capitol also included Parkinson vetoing a line-item in the budget bill that would have prevented Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri from receiving approximately \$300,000 in federal funds for family planning services.

In his veto message, Parkinson explained his decision: “Regardless of one’s views on whether abortion should be allowed in this country, hopefully we can all agree that we should make every effort to prevent unplanned pregnancies,” Parkinson said. “Access to affordable family planning services and contraceptives is critical if we are to continue reducing the number of abortions that occur in this state.”

Among other recent decisions, Parkinson also vetoed a bill that would have made it easier for U.S. soldiers to vote. This bill would have allowed federal employees and military personnel to complete advance ballots via e-mail. Parkinson said that it would discourage advance voting.

Parkinson has also taken strides to promote energy conservation and continues to deal with other critical issues throughout the state, including current monetary dilemmas.

“Throughout the country, states are struggling with declining revenues, and Kansas is no exception. Fortunately, we are in a much better position than most states.” Parkinson said in a May 28 news release. “Times are tough, and the decisions that will have to be made will not be easy, but they are necessary. Every group, every agency and every program affected by our budget will be called upon to share in this solution, and I will make sure that the action we take is responsible and reasonable.”

Many state lawmakers appreciate his open-door policy.

“His door is always open and he’s always willing to listen,” said Rep. Sydney Carlin, D-Manhattan. “I expect to see only great things come from his term as governor.”

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