

Final projects shine

Dalton Intermediate STEM students partner with local businesses

By ABBY ARMBRUSTER Staff Writer Published: January 14, 2013 4:00AM

DALTON DISTRICT -- The first batch of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) students at Dalton Intermediate School finished their semester with an open house showcasing their final projects as well as partnering with local businesses that encourage sustainable living.

The open house, held Friday, Jan. 11, allowed the eighth grade students' final projects to shine. According to DIS teacher Laura Grimm, each student's project had to deal with sustainable living which was the main theme of this semester's STEM course.

Student Ike Neuenschwander created a virtual home through Google Sketchup that utilized top-of-the-line energy-efficient appliances and specific materials to make the home as friendly to the earth as possible.

"The roof is aluminum. It's a decently-priced metal roof. The metal reflects the heat keeping it out of attic and it (will) last for 35 years with almost no maintenance," Neuenschwander said.

Student Allison Smith purchased quilting squares from MCC Connections in Kidron that were made from recycled material. Smith spent two months quilting the materials to make a quilt that will be donated to the children who were harmed in the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting last month.

Education Specialist at Stark-Tuscarawas-Wayne Joint Solid Waste Management District Wendy Bullock said she was impressed with the work that she has seen from the students.

"These kids are amazing," Bullock said. "I was in the classroom maybe a month or two ago talking to them about recycling and they're very, very bright, very enthusiastic, very impressive, very respectful especially for eighth graders."

Bullock set up a booth at the open house, showing attendees about the cooperation between the school and the waste management district.

"It re-enforces, I think, the good work that they did. You know, someone cares enough to come out and support them," Bullock said. "It also kind of supports their information (in their projects)."

Bullock said she has seen the importance of STEM classes with her own children.

"They provide good opportunities, I think," Bullock said. "It gives them research skills that they're going to need, for sure, and organizational skills. All these kids had to go out in the community and they had to network and talk to people and those skills are invaluable."

Student Adrian Dixon, who researched the countries with the largest rates of obesity and overweight people, said he learned how to find pictures, make charts and "do lots and lots of research."

Other businesses showcased at the open house included Ernie's Bicycle Shop, the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center, the Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute, The Wilderness Center, Wayne County Sustainable Energy Network, Local Roots and Orrville Cycling and Fitness.

Grimm said next semester's STEM class will focus more on engineering and mathematics.

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Dan Starcher
photos/www.buydrphotos.com Visitors pack into the Dalton Intermediate School Friday for the STEM course open house. Along with student presentations, Wayne County companies including Local Roots and Orrville Cycling and Fitness set up booths to inform attendees about sustainable living options in the area.