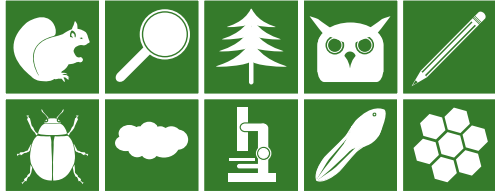


SCIENCE FIRSTHAND PARTNERS IN DISCOVERY



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2009

**Science Firsthand has had an eventful and rewarding year!
Here are some highlights:**

Center News

With the school year over, it's a good time to share the diverse explorations that Science Firsthand teams have pursued throughout the spring term.

At the **T.J. Dulski Center**, teams have been investigating rocketry, including designing and building a catapult, with their mentor Eric and Stephanie, the SF program manager.

Students from Dr. Catherine Lange's Science Education class at Buffalo State College mentored **The Valley Center** youth this spring. Electricity, chemistry, water testing, soap making and many other investigations resulted. The college students' participation was well received, and we are looking forward to matching Buff State students to SF youth in the future.

Youth at the **Seneca Street United Methodist Church** were focused on the science of gardening. The Babcock Community Garden was started this spring, and kids were very involved in building raised beds, propagating plants, planting and composting. They are now tending to their beds.

Polonia Hall's SF program included a Food Science series, planned and mentored by a group of students from Dr. Judy Larkin's Leadership and Motivation class at Canisius College. Mentors from the Nigerian Social Association and Stephanie Candelario from Houghton College provided a Saturday morning program. Both were very successful in engaging kids in new discoveries.

The girls at **St. Monica's Scholars** completed their first semester of Science Firsthand. Doug Knorr, a volunteer at St. Monica's became a Science Firsthand mentor. Carolyn Furgala and Katrina Borelli, college students, joined him and became a mentoring team with 7th and 8th grade girls there.

Kids at **The Boys & Girls Club Babcock Clubhouse** had a great spring with their mentors, Rebecca Seversen and Katie Porter, another student from Dr. Lange's class at Buffalo State College. They really enjoyed making bricks from materials on site, "bubble-ology," investigating various ways to start seedlings, and examining the science of physical fitness.

Young Investigators Conference 2009

The Young Investigators Conference, held on May 2 at the Buffalo Zoo, was the best ever. Over 450 youth and adults came and participated in a great variety of hands-on investigations, selected from those that SF kids most enjoyed. Thanks to Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers, Buffalo Audubon Society and Mike Petrenic and Erie County 4-H for participating with their own hands-on investigations. For photos of the event, go to http://firsthandlearning.com/yic_2009_photos/yic_2009_photos.html.



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Science Firsthand is an NSF-sponsored project that provides urban community centers with a unique resource for involving middle school youth with science during out-of-school time; opportunities for hands-on, student driven investigation through a mentoring relationship.



Contact Marilyn Sozanski at marilyn.sozanski@gmail.com, Bill Rogers at billroger@gmail.com; or call 831-8722. If you are thinking about becoming a mentor, feel free to join us.



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SF Envirolab

The first Envirolab, a designated space for hands-on inquiry at an out-of school-time program, has been funded through a grant from the Cummings Foundation. The Envirolab will increase capacity for SF at one of our partnering sites, helping to establish long-term sustainability.

Summer 2009

Summer is the season for unlimited outdoor explorations. SF teams will have opportunities to investigate rich urban landscapes – natural and man-made. Three new community partners will include Science Firsthand in their summer programs:

- HOPE Refugee Services is located on the West Side of Buffalo, providing academic assistance and enrichment for youth who are in refugee resettlement programs.
- Gloria Parks Community Center in North Buffalo offers comprehensive services to the community, including youth recreation, tutoring, and a summer camp.
- St. Augustine's Scholars is the brother school to St. Monica's Scholars. The middle school students there are encouraged to consider private and parochial high schools, and have access to small classes and enrichment that enables them to excel.

Introducing the SF Collaborative of Buffalo

Community partners offering Science Firsthand are being invited to join the new and growing Science Firsthand Collaborative of Buffalo. While still in the formative stage, the collaborative's main objective is to establish a structure in which Science Firsthand partners can share resources, opportunities and events, helping to build the capacity for hands-on science at their centers and long-term sustainability for Science Firsthand.

Grant Awarded

We are very pleased to announce that First Hand Learning was awarded a 2009 Primetime Grant from Erie County in support of Science Firsthand and the collaborative programming we are initiating. This summer that programming will include weekly field trips that focus on hands-on science opportunities for SF participants from various centers. In addition, youth from all Science Firsthand programs will engage in environmental community service in their neighborhoods: at the Bailey Street Peninsula with the South Park HS Green Team, Buffalo Re-use, the Central Terminal and M.A.P. Thank you to Erie County Dept of Youth Services for providing this opportunity.

AmeriCorps Job Recruiting

Science Firsthand will recruit seven new AmeriCorps ABLÉ members for the 2009 – 2010 school year. These members will work directly with youth as SF Program Managers at partnering community centers in Buffalo. For a full job description, go to the AmeriCorps link at the First Hand Learning website: <http://firsthandlearning.com/sciencefirsthand.html>

Summer Intern

The Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Western New York has generously arranged an internship position at First Hand Learning for the winner of their annual summer internship program. We are pleased to have Kyle Gray working here this summer on a project to research, develop, and implement a plan for the ongoing sustainability of Science Firsthand. Kyle is a graduate of Nichols School and a rising junior at Harvard, majoring in mathematics.

Get Involved with Science Firsthand!

- Become a mentor and start investigating your local environment with a child.
- Check with one of our community partners to volunteer for SF.
- Support the developing SF Collaborative by providing field trip opportunities, events, expertise in various related fields, or materials and supplies.
- Become a sponsor by funding an SF program in your community