



SCIENCE FIRSTHAND – PARTNERS IN DISCOVERY

SCIENCE FIRSTHAND NEWS - OCTOBER 2007

IT'S A NEW (AFTER-) SCHOOL YEAR

Science Firsthand is partnering with six out-of-school-time providers this year. While each site adapts the program to suit its needs, the core mission of *Science Firsthand* remains the same: to promote learning through inquiry. Below you'll find updates on the six locations offering *Science Firsthand*:



- **Polonia Hall** begins its third year offering *Science Firsthand* to students. Lee Evans, the *Science Firsthand* AmeriCorps Volunteer, and Martha Watson, a Daemen student, will mentor children there.
- **The T.J. Dulski Center** has many new developments. After years of delays, Franczik Park, adjacent to the center, will be open for use by residents. A parcel behind the center will become a natural habitat that can be used for science inquiry. This past summer, children from Dulski gardened at the Food Bank Community Garden project. Weekly visits provided opportunities for observing insects, harvesting and weighing produce, and garden maintenance. Welcome to new Dulski mentors, Kristie Brachman and Ted Steegman.
- **The Valley Community Center** is continuing one-to-one mentoring for the third year. Returning mentors, Pat Rogers, Mary Hughes, Tariq Hakim and Bill Rogers, and new mentor Lee Evans, are looking forward to a newly developed science space and exploring the rich environment around the center.
- **Seneca Street United Methodist Church** has expanded the Service Learning component of their after-school program to include *Science Firsthand*. Some of the Daemen students who have chosen to volunteer at the church are SF mentors, allowing the program to be offered daily. Karen and Ben Little have returned as mentors this fall, and Dezarie Hutchison, Matt Ferguson, Kurt Ransom, Michelle Bogumil, Patricia Yu and Jing Lin from Daemen have joined them.
- **Boys & Girls Club Babcock Clubhouse** is beginning its second year. B&GC mentors from last year, Vanita and Xavier Evans, Lafesa Killian, and Cory Haslam have returned as experienced SF mentors. Over the summer, students continued investigations with Lee Evans, so they are ready and eager for more.
- **The Belle Center** is offering SF for the first time this year. Students from Buffalo State College and D'Youville are mentoring there, with Sheila Christopher, who is a returning mentor. Richard Butz, a former mentor and Buffalo State instructor, has been instrumental in recruiting and training mentors. Sara White, Amy Mulder, Megan Helmes, Hillary Benesch, Shawn Coffey, Nick Lundgren, Dan McCray, and Charles Harding will be starting there in October.



A BIG WELCOME TO ALL NEW AND RETURNING MENTORS!

The key to a successful SF program always lies in the interaction between mentors and mentees. This relationship is the foundation on which investigation and experimentation can flourish. There are still many children who are waiting for mentors to explore with them. Do you know someone who would like to be a *Science Firsthand* mentor? If so, contact the SF staff at 831-8722.

Science Firsthand
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Phone:
717-831-8722

Fax:
716-838-6043
On the web:
www.firsthandlearning.org

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, or 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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THE ENVIROLAB: A LEARNING PLACE FOR CITY KIDS

An exciting new project is getting underway that promises to create new opportunities for investigating science outside of school time. **First Hand Learning, Inc.**, in



collaboration with the **Valley Community Center**, **The Belle Center** and the **T. J. Dulski Community Center**, has proposed the development of community-based learning laboratories, called **Envirolabs**. **Envirolabs** will serve as dedicated spaces within the community centers for pre-teens and teens to investigate and experiment. The labs will be equipped with an array of science materials and will provide

a dedicated place where young people can investigate the flora, fauna, and other phenomena that inhabit their immediate surroundings aided by the support of an older mentor. Stay tuned for more information!

AMERICORPS JOB OPPORTUNITY – SCIENCE LAB COORDINATOR

Science Firsthand has a position for a part-time SCIENCE COORDINATOR (900 hours over 12 months) for the **Valley Community Center**, one of our partnering sites. The science coordinator manages the **Envirolab**, carries out lab- and field-based science investigations with youth (K-12) in the Center's after-school program, and coordinates the activities of *Science Firsthand's* adult volunteers, the mentors. The **Valley Community Center** is located at 93 Leddy St., Buffalo, NY 14210.

To learn more about the position contact *Science Firsthand* at (716) 831-8722.

INQUIRY CENTER UPDATE

Thanks to our **AmeriCorps Volunteer**, **Lee Evans**, the *Science Firsthand Inquiry Center* is now a great resource for SF mentors. Located on the fifth floor of the TriMain Center at 2495 Main Street in Buffalo, the **Inquiry Center** can be used to search for materials and equipment, try out investigations with the SF staff, and access on-line supplies for teams to use. If you are a current mentor, go to www.firsthandlearning.org, then select the *Science Firsthand* home page and look for **New! Inquiry Center Inventory (pdf)** on the left-hand side. This is a long list of all kinds of interesting materials that are available for you to use with your mentees. Checking through the list might inspire ideas for lots of investigations! Please contact us if you would like to visit the **Inquiry Center**, 831-8722.

Buffalo Partners:

The T.J. Dulski Center; 129 Lewis St., Buffalo 14206; 847 - 2860

Polonia Hall; 385 Paderewski St., Buffalo 14212; 855 - 2124

Valley Community Center; 93 Leddy St., Buffalo 14210; 824 - 6235

Seneca Street United Methodist Church; 1218 Seneca St., 14210; 825 - 6742

Boys & Girls Clubs, Babcock Clubhouse; 282 Babcock St., Buffalo 14210; 825 - 1016

The Belle Center; Erie Regional Housing Development Corporation 107 Maryland St., Buffalo 14201; 845 - 0485