SUNDAY
AUGUST 14, 2005

The Herald-Sun

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DURHAM

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COMING TOMORROW

Hi neighbor!

Meet Mr. Neighborhood himself, INC President Bill Anderson

Durham police make another arrest in MetroSport shooting case | **B6**

Governor signs N.C. state budget into law | **B10**

Duke law clinic gives parents a hand

Students help younger pupils get what they need in school

BY PAUL BONNER
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To all appearances, the only thing wrong with the 11-year-old boy was his repeated bad behavior and suspensions from school.

As the law students of Duke Law School's Children's Education Law Clinic took a closer look, however, a different picture emerged. The boy's primary problem might be academic, according to an evaluation they helped his family obtain. He had dyslexia that had gone undiagnosed. A law student from the clinic attended meetings between the boy's mother and school administrators that resulted in special education services for him.

The case was one of scores that the clinic, a community-service arm of Duke Law School, handles annually on behalf of public-school students and their families.

Helping families

Based in downtown Durham, the Children's Education Law Clinic provides legal advice and representation to help families obtain what federal law guarantees: an appropriate free education in the least-restrictive environment.

STEWART

WETTACH

The service, free to low-income families, serves mostly students in Durham, Wake and Orange counties but also extends to the 11-county greater Triangle area. It handles about 60 cases a year. Most often, cases involve children's special educational needs or their long-term suspension or expulsion, said the program's director, Jane Wettach, who also is a professor in the law school. It is one of three legal aid clinics operated by Duke Law School; the others address legal issues involving AIDS and economic development in low-wealth communities.

Law school students also volunteer in several outside public-interest projects, such as assessing prison inmates' claims of wrongful conviction and tax filing assistance.

"We did a lot of interviewing and concluded [the Children's Education Law Clinic] was an area where parents and children needed advocacy, and it's very, very hard to find a private lawyer willing to do it," Wettach said.

Between eight and 10 law school students staff the clinic during the school year, for which, along with a classroom seminar, they receive course credit,. This summer, however, the clinic employed a rising second-year Duke Law student, Meredith Stewart, under an "extern" arrangement sponsored by the Houston office of global law firm Howrey LLP.

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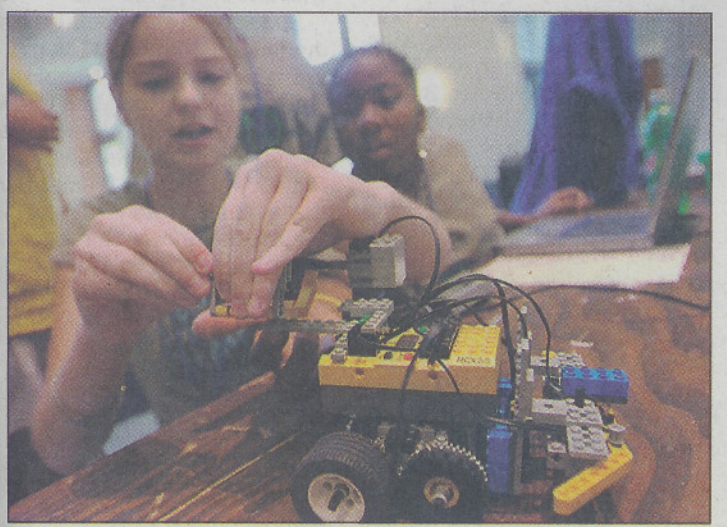
Kids get hands-on

THE HERALD-SUN | PHOTOS BY KEVIN SEIFERT

Keiara Davis (center), a rising ninth-grader at Early College High School at N.C. Central University, checks out cells taken from a swab of human cheek tissue while fellow InnoWorks 2005 campers Aissia Bedel (left), a rising junior at Durham School of the Arts, and Kameron Hodges, a rising sixth-grader at Shepard Magnet Middle School, wait for a look. InnoWorks founder Billy Hwang monitors the lesson from behind.

INNOWORKS 2005



Amanda Starnes (left), a rising Chewning Middle School eighth-grader, fiddles with a robotics project as rising Brogden Middle seventh-grader Cydney Newman watches.

Duke camp gives students close-up look at science

BY PAUL BONNER
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Using their arms to make a lane for a robotic car, middle-school students tested the vehicle's sensors that kept it traveling between the barriers.

A program on a laptop computer communicated with the Lego-built car's electronic controller.

The four-student team calling themselves Team Sponge was part of InnoWorks, a day camp at Duke University to allow middle-schoolers to have fun with scientific projects.

Founded by Duke engineering senior Billy Hwang, InnoWorks is run by college students at Duke and at the University of Maryland.

Robot cars

At Duke last week, InnoWorks got Durham middle-school students into investigations and competitions under the theme "Making Sense of Senses." The robot car competition involved negotiating a maze

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Museum with IB curiosit

BY GI
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Hook 'em

The fair February's Week and advantage um's summ to organize

see

Car enthusiasts brake long enough to show of

BY GINNY SKALSKI
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During the week, you're most likely

auto enthusiasts' passion for restoring cars. "By me being a mechanic, I live and breathe cars."

CAMP

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and dumping a payload on cue. Nearly 30 college-student volunteers were mentors for the 44 middle-school students. The latter were chosen from among those receiving free and reduced-price lunches, most of them at Chewning Middle School.

As the robot car teams worked in the Fitzpatrick Center at the Pratt School of Engineering, other students at a lab in Duke's Biology Department nearby used microscopes to examine termite innards, cells from inside their cheeks and bacteria that remained on their hands even after washing.

"Could you eat wood?" Hwang asked the students. "Could you digest it?" Unlike the termites, he explained, we don't have the special bacteria in our digestive tracts that enable them to dine on 2-by-4s.

Other projects included fingerprint analysis and other crime scene investigation techniques using homemade pH indicators made from cabbage juice and chromatography to analyze ink to identify a pen used to write a note. Students made model rockets and studied their trajectories and pretended to be music producers, designing and building electronic circuits to extract a vocal track from a musical recording.

"We want to make them more enthusiastic about science and learning in general," Hwang said. "We're throwing a lot at them, but they're in a team atmosphere that helps them in building confidence."

Busy leader

Hwang undertakes a good bit himself, as a senior with a triple major in biomedical engineering, physics and electrical and computer engineering who already has published several papers in scientific research journals. Somehow, he also manages to edit a campus humanities journal and play violin in the university symphony.

Established as a nonprofit corporation with Hwang as its director, this is the second summer for InnoWorks, for which he and others have developed a curriculum and training materials. The program has gained sponsorship from GlaxoSmithKline, Cisco Systems, the Burroughs Wellcome Fund and others. It is free to the campers, with lunch provided.

As Team Sponge worked out the bugs in its robotic car, team member Kenneth Blanding, who attends Chewning, said his favorite team competition during the weeklong camp was dropping eggs without breaking them, from the stairways in the Fitzpatrick Center's atrium to its flagstone floor. His team achieved the highest drop, using padding and a parachute. He also helped the team redesign its rocket's fins to increase the craft's trajectory and the fins' durability.

"I learn new things every day," Blanding said.

THE HERALD-SUN | KEVIN SEIFERT

Kenneth Blanding (top), a rising seventh-grader at Chewning Middle School; Sharad Satsangi (top left), a University of Maryland junior electrical engineering major; Cydney Newman (at laptop), a rising seventh-grader at Brogden Middle School; Ashley Morton (bottom left), a Brogden rising seventh-grader; Amanda Starnes, a rising Chewning eighth-grader; and Nita Amornsiripanitch (bottom), a Duke biology undergraduate student, work on a robotics project during InnoWorks 2005 inside the Fitzpatrick Center at Duke University. The weeklong camp is designed to boost enthusiasm for science and learning.