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“Young Scholars” Camps Returning This Summer for Area Youth

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— For the second consecutive year, Illinois Wesleyan University will offer “IWU Young Scholars” camps. This academic summer enrichment program offers camps for students from fourth through eighth grades that incorporate a liberal arts focus through hands-on activities and student-designed projects. The camps are taught in small classes by licensed teachers and Illinois Wesleyan faculty.



Young scholars enjoy an exploding soda bottle demonstration during a 2014 summer camp.

“Inventions/Innovations,” a camp for students entering fourth or fifth grade, will allow students the opportunity to use facilities on campus, from the computer labs to the observatory, to analyze how inventions impact our lives. Students can develop their own creations to address a problem they identify, and use 3D printing as they consider the whole invention process from design, cost analysis, prototyping and testing.

The “Young Scientists” camp is for students entering sixth through eighth grades. Hands-on experimentation and student-designed projects are the focus of this camp, providing students multiple opportunities to work through the experimental process in a variety of disciplines including biology, physics, chemistry, environmental studies, programming and photography. Enrollment in “Young Scientists” is currently at capacity; organizers encourage those who are interested to add their names to a waiting list.

Students will share their ideas in a supportive environment modeled on the popular ABC television program *Shark Tank*. “Professors will give the students feedback not only in developing their ideas, but also helping them understand better the underlying science,” said Gabriel C. Spalding, B. Charles and Joyce Eichhorn Ames Professor of Physics. “We think this will give the students a sense of ownership over the material. We’re going to try and help them come up with fantastic ideas.”

In developing the program, faculty from across a variety of disciplines worked with IWU alumni and current educational studies students to design a curriculum that fully utilizes the college environment and campus facilities to offer children a variety of opportunities for exploration.

“It turns out this was such a successful model that only four students from our community who participated last year are not returning this year, and they have scheduling conflicts,” said Spalding. “That says that there is an enormous desire in our community for exactly this kind of program.”

Both camps meet July 6-16, Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily. The fee is \$305 per student for either of the two-week sessions, and includes lunch each day in the University’s Dining Commons. Early drop-off and after hours supervision is available for an additional fee.



Professor Gabe Spalding works with young scholars.

Registration information can be found at blogs.iwu.edu/youngscholars/. For more information, call Spalding at (309) 556-3004 or email youngscholars@iwu.edu.

By Danielle Kamp '15