

DEAR PARENTS



From
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It has been a full year of learning, experimenting, discovering, and I thank you for all of your support and encouragement you have given your child in helping make this such a successful year. I have posted pictures on my website: newhartfordschools.org/donovan and I invite you to view some of the our memorable moments we have shared. (Look to the left side on screen for the STEM scrap-book / DELTA STEM pics.)

Although the school year is just about over it is my hope that my students will continue to see the world as “wonder-FULL” this summer, so in this final newsletter of the year I wanted to make you aware of some summer STEM activities families can do at home and/or from other local summer STEM summer camps. I also encourage you to stay in touch over the summer by either posting in Edmodo or by email. Send me pictures of any STEM adventures your family encounters!

Have a great summer!

SUMMER STEM FUN

I have had many parents ask me about recommendations about continuing the STEM experience during the summer. There are ample opportunities around the area, but I have highlighted a few below. For those who have not had the experience of learning to write code, I highly recommend computer coding classes for all ages as it teachers young learners the STEM language of the 21st century. My students have loved the hands on projects, but I often tell them

that if I did not teach them about writing code, I would not be an effective STEM teacher! Robots run by algorithms may replace jobs that require rote processes, but there will always be a great need for individuals to write instructions for these robots. Learning to write code is a valuable life-ready skill, and I encourage you to visit sites such as CODE.org to learn more about the importance of learning the logic of a computer.

STEM Courses at MVCC

There are many STEM camps to choose from at MVCC, but I will highlight a few here that are taught by NHCSD educators .

Week of Code:

High school teacher Mr. Mike Amante and I will be leading students through the Google CSFirst Game Coding Curriculum. I will be teaching the younger ages in the morning and Mr. Amante will be instructing older ages in the afternoon. Students will have the opportunity to design their own computer game by the end of the 4-day session, and will have a lifetime subscription to MIT's Scratch.com coding site

App Attack & Minecraft

My NHCSD junior high school colleague, Meredith Doyle, will be teaching other computer technology courses. In App Attack, Ms Doyle will lead students through creating apps for the Android, and she will also be teaching how to be a great engineer and code-modder via the much-loved website Minecraft.

There are many more STEM classes at MVCC, from learning about nanotechnology to creating your own movie, taught by many qualified CNY professionals. For more information visit their website: mvcc.edu/cced/material/summer

SUNY Polytechnic Institute

LEGO robotics has an amazing project-based curriculum and this summer they are offering introduction LEGO camps to students. SUNY Poly also has some other STEM classes such as Nanotechnology and Cybersecurity. Visit sunypoly.edu/summeriteens for more information

Griffis Institute in Rome

griffisinstitute.org/who-we-work-with/afri/stem/summer-programs
Lots of cyber-security sessions offered.

Great STEM websites:

- **Instructables.com**
A great site for ideas of making, hacking, and designing Do-it_Yourself (DIY) projects.
- **PBS Design Squad**
pbskids.org/designsquad/
I cannot say enough about this website. Lots of inspiration to create and learn with many videos & engineering challenges.
- **CODE.org**
Great way to learn about computer coding via visual block language code
- **Scratch.mit.edu**
Another great coding site.

Be a backyard scientist!

If you Google the term “backyard scientist” you will come up with many awesome science experiments to do with your kids, but did you know that you can also use computer technology (mobile apps) to actually make valuable contributions to the ongoing current field of scientific research? How cool is that?



ProjectNoah.org is one of those crowdsourcing projects that enables common folk like us, from all over the world, to observe nature and record our results on their mobile app to then be directly uploaded to a data collection site. This data will assist university scientists in their research, so we all can make great, albeit small, contributions to science!

From Project Noah website: “Our ultimate goal is to build the go-to platform for documenting all the world’s organisms, and through doing this we hope to develop an effective way to measure Mother Nature’s pulse. By developing tools to help the mobile masses share their encounters with nature, we are building a powerful force for crowdsourcing ecological data collection and an important educational tool for wildlife awareness and preservation.”

My goal is to try to incorporate this in the DELTA STEM program 15-16, but I welcome families to try it at home and send me feedback on what you like or not like about it. In essence, you will be contributing to my own educational research!

Email me at kdonovan@nhart.org, or for students in grades 4-6, please post to Edmodo to document your experience.