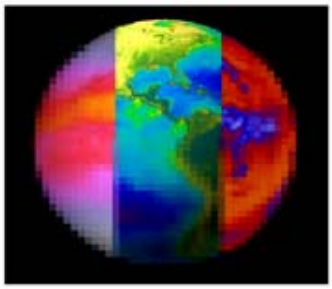
The Joint Institute for Nuclear Astrophysics

Sensing Our World at Notre Dame 2007



The University of Notre Dame

The minds of 19 middle school youngsters were brightened by the high-wattage power of scientific discovery the third week of July when they immersed themselves in the second annual “Sensing Our World” week-long summer science camp at Notre Dame. Camp instructors included faculty, staff, and graduate students from Physics, Chemistry & Biochemistry, and Biology departments at ND, as well as a certified 9-12 teacher.

The goal of the program is to stimulate middle school students’ interest in physical science using familiar objects that operate by important, basic physical principles. With the help of Notre Dame instructors, the students, age 12-14, familiarized themselves with the fundamental forces underlying cryogenics and superconductivity, electric circuits and generators, laser beams, nuclear reactions, electrolysis, electric motors, acids and bases, and the relationship between magnets and speakers. A pre-test and post-test are administered for each session. The pre-test informs the instructors about each student’s scientific background, which assists in tailoring the session content and level. The post-test gives a quantitative evaluation about the student’s progress over the course of the week. A concluding open-ended questionnaire is used to assess the student’s feelings about the camp.

The students’ sense of excitement culminated on the final day of camp with their Summer Science Camp Symposium when they demonstrated their new-found skills to family and friends in the Galleria of the Jordan Hall of Science.

Related Web Sites:

http://www.jinaweb.org/outreaSOW/SOWinfo.pdf

Contact:

JINA Outreach
University of Notre Dame
(574) 631-8297
Phys.jinaout.1@nd.edu