SCIENCE CENTER VIDEO WORKSHOP EXPLORES SCIENCE, LITERACY

A DOZEN STUDENTS TURNED THEIR VISION INTO VIDEO IN ONE DAY

PITTSBURGH, July 16, 2014 — In the span of just a few hours, 12 middle and high school students transformed ideas about scientific topics into videos during Carnegie Science Center’s Digital Video SMASH JAM Workshop this weekend. The intensive workshop is part of the National Science Foundation “Intersections” grant awarded to the Science Center and the University of Pittsburgh’s Western Pennsylvania Writing Project.

Staff from the Science Center and the Writing Project developed the concept for the video project, focusing on the intersections between science and literacy. The Pittsburgh program is one of 10 grant recipients in the nation.

During the free workshop on July 12, students were asked to explore a scientific concept, such as gravity or friction, through video. They selected a genre for their film, developed a storyboard, filmed footage on iPads in the Science Center, and then edited their video short. As a fun twist, students chose a line they’d all incorporate into their films: “I’ve got a bad feeling about this.”

“The integration of curriculum is essential in quality science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education, and through this workshop, participants had the opportunity to explore how science and literacy intersect. The students came with varying degrees of knowledge and experience but all learned a tremendous amount, had a lot of fun, and made some great new friends in the process,” said Alana Kulesa, the Science Center’s Director of Strategic Education Initiatives. “It is our hope that by creating narratives using digital video technology, we are providing opportunities for learning new skills and knowledge in a dynamic new way.”

Workshop participant Logan Masek, 17, said he has experience filming videos, and he wanted to learn more.
“I've learned a lot more at this workshop than I have so far in the field,” he said. “I now know how to make a storyboard.”

Ninth-grade students Jen Lerner and Tia Lammers, too, said they enjoyed learning how to create a storyboard.

Several parents whose children attended the workshop found the experience valuable.

“It was really a wonderful program. The educators were thorough, and they made it fun,” said Monica Peklinsky, whose 12-year-old son Liam traveled from West Virginia to attend the workshop.

Each organization selected for the grant chose its own direction for the project. The team from Charlotte, N.C., for example, is focusing on tinkering and making, while the team from Missoula, Mont., is incorporating an urban archeology theme, said Becky Carroll, of Inverness Research, a company documenting the work at each site.

In continued partnership with the Western Pennsylvania Writing Project, Carnegie Science Center plans to offer the Digital Video SMASH JAM Workshop again in the 2014-2015 school year. The student workshop will be offered as well as an educator professional development workshop following the same model, with dates to be announced in the future.

This project is part of Pittsburgh City of Learning, an initiative of The Sprout Fund. Pittsburgh City of Learning is part of a nationwide movement to leverage community resources to ensure learning doesn't stop when school lets out. By participating in City of Learning programs happening in schools, museums, libraries, parks, and community centers, young people can explore their interests, develop new skills, and connect their learning to real world opportunity by earning digital badges. Learn more at pghcityoflearning.org.

Additional photos available upon request.

For more about the Science Center and its programs, visit CarnegieScienceCenter.org or call 412.237.3400.

About Carnegie Science Center
Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center’s goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh’s premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes, and off-site education programs.
About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums dedicated to exploration through art and science: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. Annually, the museums reach more than 1.2 million people through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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Students Michael Magnotti and Liam Peklinsky edit their video with the help of Joe Burke, a Western Pennsylvania Writing Project fellow and teacher at Environmental Charter School.