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# STARBASE Houston Hosts Inaugural Camp for Students

HOUSTON – They constructed birdhouses and tested its strength, they designed their own unmanned aerial vehicles, they sent rockets flying through a tube in the classroom, they discovered the properties of materials created with nanotechnology and assessed the solubility of different materials and learned how global positioning systems worked.

For one week, 20 Houston-area students took a hands-on approach to science, technology, engineering and mathematics during the STARBASE Houston’s inaugural STEM camp July 19-22, 2016, at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston.

“This is our first year doing this camp because we wanted to thank Ellington Field for all the support they provided to us for the 20 years we’ve been here,” said Loraine Guillen, STARBASE Houston program director, during the graduation July 22. “Another reason is because I’ve bumped into people and they don’t know that STARBASE is here and that we exist.”

For five hours each day, the students engaged in various experiments to help them understand scientific principles, such as Newton’s Laws, Bernoulli’s principle, nanotechnology, navigation, aviation and mapping.

“This is a lot more hands on and it helped me learn better,” said Jaden Enloe, 12. “They told us how to do it and I learn best that way. I need to see it to visualize it, so it was cool to work with.

Enloe, who will enter the seventh grade this year, said the program also helped the students learn to work together.

During the graduation ceremony, former STARBASE student Tech. Sgt. Elizabeth Alicea delivered a few words to the students and guests.

“I was always grateful to the STARBASE program because I felt that it was one of the first pillars in my life and development,” she said. Alicea attended the STARBASE program in Puerto Rico, which is sponsored by the Puerto Rico National Guard. “Take all your STARBASE experiences and take it to school and share them,” she said. “Don’t forget them.”

The Texas National Guard sponsors STARBASE Houston, a Department of Defense program. The program hosts more than 50 classes throughout the school year, to include public schools, home schools and parochial schools, Guillen said.

The curriculum is based on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, and is aligned with the state education standards.

The purpose of STARBASE is to expose youth to the technological environments, while allowing them to engage with civilian and military role models on military bases and installations.

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