

LOCAL STUDENTS FEEL THE FORCE OF SCIENCE

Approximately 1240 elementary and middle-school students will participate in “JASON Days: Terminal Velocity,” an 8 day science program at Wichita State University, September 23-October 4. The event is a kickoff for local teachers that are utilizing the JASON project curriculum, a standards-based science program created by explorer, Titanic discoverer and native Wichitan, Dr. Robert Ballard over 20 years ago.

“JASON brings science alive by exposing students to real-world scientists and work they do in the field through hands-on exploration and discovery,” says Amy Strong, Assistant Director of the Fairmount Center for Science and Mathematics Education and JASON Program Manager. “Teachers love the event because of the way it exposes their students to science.”

Teachers incorporate the JASON project curriculum, aligned with the National and State Science Education Standards, in their classrooms throughout the year.

Each year WSU hosts JASON days to give students the opportunity to meet active local scientists and apply what they’ve learned in different events.

This year, students will meet WSU physics professor Jason Ferguson, WSU National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) Crash Dynamics Lab Manager, Robert Huculak and NIAR **Calibration and Quality Laboratory Director, Walter Lee.**

This year’s program focuses on force and motion. In the showcase event, students will compete in Hot Wheels Fabricators to build a successful racetrack complete with loops and jumps. They will create a piece of art called a wind wheel that works by the forces of nature and finally, will test their academic knowledge playing force and motion bingo.

“It’s a great learning experience and a lot of fun for the students,” says Strong. “One of our students, Maggy Botros, was selected to be on the mission team as a JASON National Argonaut. She traveled to the Jet Propulsion Lab, the Gulf of Mexico, the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety and the National Institute for Standards and Technology to learn about force and motion and help JASON host researchers with on-site fieldwork through an international competition.” She appears in the print and video components of the curriculum and will be on-site during the event with her brother Joey, also a National Argonaut, to share their experiences with local students and facilitate the Hot Wheels Fabricators activity station.

The Kansas JASON Project partners with the Ulrich Museum of Art who provides bus funding for the JASON DAYS event.

All students will have the opportunity to tour the Ulrich and learn about the connection between art and science. WSU’s participation in the JASON Project is supported financially by senior sponsors Toyota USA Foundation and The Boeing Company.

Additional support comes from Excel/Cargill Cares, the Cargill Contributions Committee and the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation.

Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Wichita State University houses the JASON project and the Fairmount Center for Science and Mathematics Education. Fairmount College offers majors in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and programs of professional training.

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