

Students Learn Team Building through GEMS

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REDSTONE ARSENAL, ALA.—Evan Denison, 15 years old, heard about GEMS from his friends and felt that it might be a great way to learn new things and get information on future jobs with the Army. He was one of 20 students who participated in the third week of the Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Sciences Program sponsored by AMRDEC.



Evan Denison (second from right) works the remote control to move his robot in the soccer game as his teammates help defend their goal against the other teams.

US Army Photograph.

Engineering Directorate.

A tour at SED lasts a little over an hour and is very hands-on and at times it is very immersive. Students participate in simulations and learn while doing. A typical SED tour encompasses America's Army, the current holder of the Guinness World Record for the Most Downloaded War Game—America's Army the Online Game; the Kiowa Warrior Helicopter simulator, and the Robotics Lab.

An SED tour has a certain “WOW” factor.

This was the best tour of the week, said Denison.

During the GEMS program, the students are led and mentored by local teachers who work for the GEMS program during the summer.

One of Denison's favorite teachers was Ms. Jessica Long who led the bridge-making module. "Ms. Long was very encouraging, had a good attitude, and was able to explain how to do something so it was understandable," Denison said

In this module, students each build two bridges and they build one as a team. Each bridge is then tested for its weight bearing capacity. Denison's team was able to build one that held 49 pounds. Pretty amazing when you consider the bridge was made of popsicle sticks, string and hot glue.

Working as a team was better than working alone. It felt good to build such a strong bridge, said Denison.

The GEMS program is helping the students learn that Mathematics and Science knowledge and skills are applied even after school.

For more information on GEMS go to <http://www.redstone.army.mil/amrdec/CareerOpp/outreachprograms.html#gems> or the GEMS Facebook page