

INVOCAB STEM CAMP

The EU funded project, INVOCAB, was created to improve teachers' capacities in science education as well as to implement an innovation framework in selected schools in the Caribbean. The project intends to strengthen students' math and science capabilities at the primary and secondary school levels as well as to change students' attitudes and dispositions towards science. In addition to professional development for teachers, equipment donations, curriculum support documents, science clubs and an innovation competition in schools, the INVOCAB project conducted an exciting 1 week STEM summer camp for students from participating primary schools (St. Dominic Savio RC, Santa Rosa Government Primary, Malabar Gov't Primary, and Bon Air Government Primary).

The camp was held at the Santa Rosa Government Primary School and enriched the lives of 48 children in standards 3-5. Eight teachers from the participating schools served as camp facilitators after being trained by Mathematics Senior Expert Mrs. Hazra Baksh and the International Projects' Education team. These teachers revolutionized the way that math and science was taught to the students as they engaged the campers in hands-on, minds on activities that left the children begging for more. These awesome primary school educators were:

Malabar Government Primary: Mrs. Anjanie Gopie & Mr. Stephen Turner

Santa Rosa Government Primary: Mr. Brijesh Pabaroo

Bon Air Government Primary: Mrs. Nalini Rivas & Mrs. Rupatee Singh

St. Dominic Savio R.C: Mr. Learie Gonzales, Mr. Dominique Joseph & Ms. Lisa Philip.

These teachers were eager and enthusiastic about improving students' academic performance in math and science and learned many new techniques that they will take with them into their classrooms for the new school term and that they will share with fellow colleagues at their schools.

The STEM Summer camp created a stimulating and enjoyable small-group environment where students and teachers actively immersed in science, in ways that are otherwise unattainable in the mainstream school system. The students in attendance all indicated that they thoroughly enjoyed learning about math and science from this experiential approach. All of the students

surveyed said that they learned content that would help them when they returned to school. The mathematics activities of the camp focused on building strong numeracy skills, using manipulatives and everyday items to make and solve puzzles and the use of recreational math activities to decrease students' fear of and improve their self-efficacy in math. Of the forty eight students surveyed, 85.4% indicated that they were interested in studying math at the secondary school level.

The science activities focused on exposing students to various science principles such as: surface tension, density, hydrophobic and hydrophilic substances, air pressure, aerodynamics, recycling, natural disasters and environmental awareness. Each day, students created their own mini science models which they were allowed to take home, many reported that they shared their new found knowledge with parents and siblings. Approximately 97% of the students surveyed said that they wanted to pursue science subjects in secondary school.

Building on the momentum created by the camp, the INVOCAB team presses forward with the launch of Science Clubs in preparation for the 2016 Innovation Competition in both Primary and Secondary schools in the new school term.