

CORNELL CHRONICLE

September 1, 2016



Bookmarks

Science, Tech & Medicine

Arts & Humanities

Business, Law & Society

Campus Life

Global Outreach

Archive

May 16, 2007

Fingerprints, flowers and shrimp eyeballs: Cornell researchers take science on the road to New York City schools

By *Lora K. Hine*

NEW YORK CITY -- "I've got four of 'em!" shrieked 7-year-old Brianna, holding an eyedropper she had used to draw up the salty water stored in a Mason jar. The jar, which smelled slightly like dead fish, housed hundreds of tiny, swimming organisms called brine shrimp.

"I've got five!" responded second-grade classmate Jayden, as he tenderly placed his plastic microscope slide under the stage clips and then peered tentatively down the lens. "Wow," he added, "these shrimp have huge eyeballs!"

It was just one of many scientific observations students and teachers made at the learning stations of Microworld, an educational program in New York City developed by the Cornell Center for Materials Research (CCMR).

CCMR staff and faculty members, along with representatives from several other Cornell outreach programs and research centers including the Laboratory for Elementary-Particle Physics (LEPP), the Center for Radiophysics and Space Research (CRSR) and the Cornell Institute for Biology Teachers, traveled to the Big Apple to spend three event-packed days providing underrepresented populations with research-based science education programming. The collaboration between the science outreach programs at Cornell and the Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC) connects Ithaca participants with New York City teachers and enhances existing programs through the WCMC outreach office.

Responding to Cornell's outreach mission and expanding on the New York City Partnership for School Improvement goals established by Cornell's Office of the Associate Provost for Outreach, participants provided professional development opportunities for elementary and middle-school teachers as well as enrichment activities for second-grade students and teachers at Harlem Children's Zone.

The programs, delivered during successive visits to Queens, Harlem and Manhattan, relayed basic science concepts embedded in research conducted by scientists at Cornell and funded through the National Science Foundation, NASA and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Workshop participants engaged in hands-on learning and teaching activities focused on topics ranging from Saturn's rings to flowers produced through photosynthesis.

"I think outreach is just the right thing to do," said Peter Wittich, assistant professor of physics at LEPP. Wittich helped students examine the whorls and loops of their own fingerprints and demonstrated to teachers how bubbles can be used to explain Bernoulli's Principle.

During Wittich's keynote address at WCMC, teachers asked questions about the process of science and experimental design. The discussion continued throughout the lunch that followed.

"It is interesting to see how the teachers think and to learn about their needs and expectations," said Wittich. And the process is ongoing; CRSR and LEPP will host an institute for New York participants this summer at Cornell, and trips to New York City are being planned for the fall semester.

Lora K. Hine is the educational outreach coordinator for the Laboratory for Elementary-Particle Physics at Cornell.

TRENDING

EDITOR'S PICKS
MOST EMAILED
MOST READ

College of Arts and Sciences considers curriculum changes

Herbicides can't stop invasive plants. Can bugs?

ISS project to study economics, politics of China urbanization

Cornell closes FY16 with record cash gifts, other milestones

RELATED INFORMATION

SHARE

Facebook

LinkedIn

Reddit

StumbleUpon

Twitter

 0

Printer-friendly version

Send by email

Bookmark

STORY CONTACTS

Cornell Chronicle

Lauren Gold
607-255-9736
lg34@cornell.edu

Media Contact

Media Relations Office
607-255-6074
pressoffice@cornell.edu

[About the Office](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Cornell Chronicle • 312 College Ave., Ithaca, NY 14850 • 607-255-4206

©2016