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Auto ID Solutions signs multi-year sponsorship for the University of St. Thomas STEPS program



University of St. Thomas - STEPS

Thursday, December 10, 2009 – Auto ID Solutions signs multi-year sponsorship for the University of St. Thomas STEPS program

Auto ID Solutions has made a three year commitment to the University of St. Thomas School of Engineering's STEPS (Science, Technology and Engineering Preview Summer camp for girls) program. This program is for girls entering the 7th grade who spend a week taking classes in plastics, electricity, machining, computer-aided design, assembly, web design, chemistry, physics, engineering, and robotics.

Girls create airplanes from start to finish: using a hot-wire saw, they cut wings from sturdy Styrofoam; assemble the fuselage; cut, bend, and install aluminum parts for the rudder and elevators; thermoform the canopy; and finally decorate and cover the plane's exterior. They also log computer time with a flight simulator to become familiar with the remote-control devices they'll use to fly their planes when their work is put to the test on "Fly Night." The evening where the girl's take their planes to a RC plane airfield where they are fitted with gas engines and they are able to fly their creations.

"This is an innovative program that provides girls with a chance to explore engineering with their peers and hopefully will result in more female engineers and scientists. We are excited to be a part of such a great program that has graduated more than 1,600 students since 2000 and we hope our contribution will allow the program to reach an even larger group of girls," said Christopher French, Vice President of Business Development for Auto ID Solutions.

Women make up half of the population and about 46% of the labor force in all occupations, but only 9% of engineers. Last year there were 120,000 entry-level engineering jobs and only 60,000 engineering graduates. The long-term forecast from the National Academy of Engineering projects that over the next decade, 500,000 engineers will retire and an additional 500,000 new engineering jobs will be created. STEPS is a hands-on, technology-based program that gives girls exposure to manufacturing and technical careers. The camp is an effort to attract more women to careers in engineering, manufacturing, technology and science.

"We know that young people start making career decisions around sixth or seventh grade," said Dr. Ronald Bennett, founding dean of the School of Engineering at St. Thomas. "We also know that when it comes to earning bachelor's degrees in engineering, men outnumber women by five to one. The difference is even more pronounced in the fields of electrical and mechanical engineering. Our ultimate goal in hosting the STEPS program is to encourage young women to consider careers in these fields. Plus, it's a lot of fun for them, and for us."

About STEPS

Science Technology and Engineering Preview Summer camp for girls (STEPS) is a one-week introduction to the world of technology and engineering. Campers participate in activities that give them a hands-on experience with high-tech equipment and processes. STEPS is an opportunity for GIRLS to learn more about what engineers do.

Outstanding instructors with extensive backgrounds in engineering, technology and science teach the workshops. For more information, visit: <http://www.stthomas.edu/engineering/outreach/steps/>

About Auto ID Solutions

Auto ID Solutions is the United States largest reseller of linear and 2D bar code quality tools, providing in-house and on-site NIST traceable calibration and repairs, ISO/ANSI standards interpretation, staff training, and auto identification/bar code quality seminars. They are the only company offering NIST calibration and who tests every verifier to ensure conformance with ISO15426-1/-2 (Bar Code Verifier Conformance Specifications). Headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Auto ID Solutions offers outstanding technical support with dependable delivery and quality. For more information, visit the Auto ID Solutions website at www.autoidsolutions.net

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