Boeing to Share Innovative Science, Math and Engineering Skills With More Than 550 California Teachers

They put humans on the moon and designed the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station. Now a group of volunteer engineers and technical personnel at Boeing Reusable Space Systems are set to take on a more down-to-Earth challenge: launching 550 elementary and middle school educators on a mission to turn kids on to science, math and engineering.

The event is the Boeing eighth annual Discover Engineering Educator Enrichment Day (EED). It will be held from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. this Thursday, Feb. 25, at Boeing in Downey.

Teachers come from a six-county area, representing more than 250 schools in 91 California cities. The day is filled with 34 hands-on workshops taught by more than 100 Boeing volunteers who get educators excited about math and science so they will, in turn, encourage their students to pursue future scientific and technical careers.

"Math and science are the foundation of the U.S. space program, and they are critical to the success of our nation's future," said Rick Stephens, vice president and general manager of Boeing RSS. "They're not just dry and boring subjects, either -- they can be fun to learn!"

EED is designed to show teachers how to do just that: make math and science fun for their students. What's more, Boeing volunteers show them how to do that by using inexpensive, readily available household materials.

For example, teachers learn about chemistry by making silly putty. They master the concepts of molecular structure while forming Polyurethane into cupcake molds. Principles of electrical motors are demonstrated with paper clips, batteries and office supplies. Flying rubberbands are used in a workshop plotting trajectory, using distance and angles.

The trash-recycling workshop at EED utilizes scientific experiments, showing teachers how they can reuse and restore products while being environmentally responsible. The "Magical World of Geometry" incorporates magician's tricks to demonstrate how math is used in the everyday world. "Welcome to the Future" teaches critical thinking about life in space, a project that helps young engineers become creative problem solvers.

"Through innovative programs like Educator Enrichment Day, industry can make meaningful contributions to our nation's educational system and provide teachers with practical knowledge, helping to bridge the gap between schools and the workplace," Stephens said. "Boeing gets a lot out of the program, too - we learn as much from the teachers about what's going on academically today as they do from us.

"We believe it's important for industry to contribute significantly to the communities our employees live and work in," he said. "That's why we're committed to partnering with educators and other professionals to make the world a better place."

Boeing Educator Enrichment Day is held in conjunction with the National Engineers Week annual outreach program.

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Editor's Note - Those who can't stop by but would like photographs of participants from their area should contact Boeing at least one day before the event to arrange this free service.

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