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Photos Courtesy of Community Outreach Ministry

PRESS RELEASE

 Teens Take on Solar Power at September STEM Workshop

Hemet, CA -- September marked another successful launch of “Gearing Up For STEM” Mentor Protégé Workshops hosted by Community Outreach Ministry, a 501 C 3 nonprofit organization that has helped thousands of at-risk children since 2000. The organization provides positive social, safety, educational and vocational opportunities to at-risk, needy and children impacted by parental incarceration. Our mission is to help break the cycle of incarceration and reduce juvenile delinquency. Area students in both middle school and high school were eligible to join-in the event that marks the third STEM workshops held by the ministry this year.

The two-hour, Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) event took place at Aspire Community Day School in Hemet on September 19 and included Marc Ang, an educator and CEO of Asian Business Industry B2B who served on the team of mentors. Bob Davies, a retired engineer and cofounder of Community Outreach Ministry and Jacori Neal, a junior at Temescal Canyon High School in Lake Elsinore also served as mentors at the workshop along with Neal’s grandmother, Marilyn Brown. Dr. Mona Davies, who cofounded Community Outreach Ministry with her husband, serves as a liaison with the faculty at area schools that participate in the organization’s events that are mostly funded by donations that are distributed to youth as scholarships or used to hold events. Some of the activities held by the ministry on behalf of children and teens include camping trips and the ministry’s annual Angel Tree Christmas Party where at-risk children of all ages are invited and all given holiday gifts donated by the public in a setting that includes a catered dinner and live musical performances by volunteers.

When Neal was young, he was referred to the ministry by Angel Tree, a Program of Prison Fellowship. Community Outreach Ministry partners with Prison Fellowship to improve these children’s lives. In addition to the STEM workshops, Community Outreach Ministry offers emergency referrals, educational workshops for children and families caught in the cycle of incarceration and outreach to educate caregivers in the prevention of crimes against children. The California Highway Patrol of Temecula, Murrieta Police Department Explorers, the Riverside County Sheriff Department, Cops for Kids of Lake Elsinore, the United States Forest Service Firefighters of Murrieta and the Temecula Valley Young Marines have participated in many of the organization’s events over the years.

A Do It Yourself (DIY) STEAM Solar Powered Racer Car kit with schematic instructions and parts for in sequence assembly was distributed to each of the students who participated at the workshop. Neal, who taught himself to build two feet high Meccano Robots converted into different configurations, brought his robots to the workshop and offered a demonstration to the teens. The students and mentors worked in small groups on the project. Teamwork and collaboration were essential to ensuring each teen’s success in completing the task at hand that served to increase the students’ knowledge of STEM. Those who finished
the solar car kit ahead of others became mentors for their teams to allow everyone the opportunity to finish the project. Click the following link to see the students in action https://vimeo.com/363880262

At the completion of the workshop, the students filled out an evaluation form. The overall responses to the questions on the form were positive with the teens in agreement that they had learned something new, were engaged by the workshop, were exposed to new insights on STEM and that the workshop, as a whole, was very useful and informative. All of the participants stated that they would recommend the workshops to others.

Some of the handwritten comments made by teens expressed how the workshop was a fun experience and that they’d like to partake in more challenging “rocket” projects in the future. Mona and Bob Davies commented that the workshop was “definitely a positive, educational experience for the students and mentors.” They also said how excited they were that the students “have a vision to take on more complex rocket projects.”

Mentor Marc Ang said that the workshops “are a process of learning and education through teaming and collaboration by the students as team players to achieve the project’s objective of every student successfully building their robots.” Jacori Neal and his grandmother Marilyn Brown commented on how they both believe education and vocation are vital to each student’s future success.

Community Outreach Ministry welcomes donations for its STEM workshops that will be used to mentor students in grades four to twelve to build their technical capacities as well as their confidence. It is imperative that these children envision the ability to pursue the fields of the future -- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics -- and to learn more about these in demand, lucrative vocational career pathways. The nonprofit group also raises scholarships to send these children to camp to learn to overcome barriers and be given a second chance to be winners and champions. To donate online, visit www.communityoutreachministry.org. Contributions may also be made by sending this text message DONATE CHAMPIONS TO this # 609-212-0627 then select Community Outreach Ministry.