



LABS

The Makerspace Playbook

Issue #12: August 2022

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: OPTUM IDAHO

Optum Idaho is a health care company who manages the outpatient benefits for the Idaho Behavioral Health Plan for Idaho Medicaid members and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. They believe that community matters and they work to create a healthier Idaho by investing in individuals, families, and communities. Having invested for two years in Idaho's Think Make Create Labs program, Optum Idaho has helped strengthen community resources and create opportunities for youth to thrive. They recognize the benefits in supporting STEM education, as well as providing opportunities for youth to better themselves by fostering life skills and practices through hands-on learning. As a partner for Idaho TMC, they also work to leverage and connect available mental health resources to Idaho's youth and families. Optum Idaho is an invaluable resource to a rural state, but also to the many individuals they have dedicated to positively impact through partnerships and collaborations such as with TMC.

~Claire Sponseller, Area Extension Educator, University of Idaho 4-H



Spotlight: Coeur d'Alene Tribal School

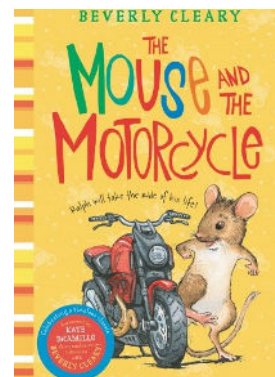
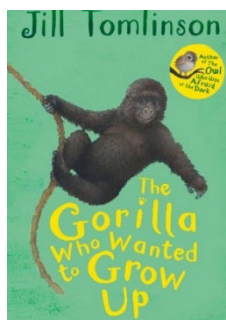
"This is my favorite day of my week, you always have something for us to do," stated a youth from the Coeur d'Alene Tribal School in DeSmet, Idaho. Since the Think Make Create (TMC) Lab debuted last summer at the One Sky One Earth Farmers Market; Melodie Sjostrom, University of Idaho Coeur d'Alene Reservation Extension team, had an extremely busy year teaching TMC STEAM activities with youth on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation which encompasses Worley, Plummer, Tensed, and DeSmet. Mondays and Tuesdays were spent at the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's Marimn Health Coeur Center with the tribe's Boys and Girls Club, every other Friday at the Coeur d'Alene Tribal School on Culture Days, and with Lakeside Elementary's Success Center. STEM/STEAM enrichment and education are not accessible in most rural parts of the United States, moreover on Native American reservations. There is a growing need for Native American youth to pursue careers in STEM/STEAM fields so they can acquire the education and skills to reinvest that knowledge into their own communities. The TMC Lab has provided enrichment and education with the goal to have youth see themselves as scientists and stay curious about their natural and fast paced world. The TMC Lab has brought awareness and piqued the curiosity of youth located on the reservation to participate. Whether it was the famous Egg Drop, Balloon Powered Cars, Submarines, or Copper Tape Flashlights the Coeur d'Alene Reservation has had a captive audience. We aren't only teaching STEAM to youth; we are strengthening partnerships with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, school districts, and afterschool programs to support and enrich the lives of our youth. Recently, the team has reached out to the underserved home school youth population by hosting TMC Lab activities weekly at the Plummer Library. The TMC Lab sponsors: Idaho 4-H, the University of Idaho, and Idaho Out of School Network, have helped the Coeur d'Alene Reservation Extension office bridge the gap by making STEM accessible to all. Lim lemtsh (thank you).

*~Shaina Nomee, Coeur d'Alene Reservation Coordinator,
University of Idaho Extension*

Give It a Try

Literacy + engineering = Novel Engineering. Novel engineering projects use books to encourage youth to find solutions to problems faced by characters in the book. The books used are typically trade books that have interesting plots and detailed description. As youth read or listen to the book ask them to identify problems the characters are facing and if there are some possible solutions youth can design in the classroom. As students brainstorm, document ideas where everyone can see them. When done with the book have students work through the engineering design process to build solutions. To learn more check out novelengineering.org.

~Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension



Put it Into Practice

Building partnerships is key to the success of afterschool programs across the country. Working with a diverse group of community partners can increase the quality and sustainability of an afterschool or summer program. Each partner comes with its own unique skills and resources that provide a wide range of support for your program. To get started on identifying potential partners complete a SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis; work through a community scan and assessment; identify key partners, and create a program one-pager to showcase your program. You can learn more about these tools and begin building your partnerships at https://bsbtoolkit.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Building-Local-Partnerships_Toolkit1.1.pdf

~Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension



Tips and Tricks

Research has shown that partnerships between families, afterschool programs and school partners is crucial to the academic, behavioral and social success of our youth. The TMC Labs are a great way to engage not only community partners but also families as partners in supporting out-of-school time learning. Through family engagement the TMC Lab can provide high quality age-appropriate activities at an event, new opportunities to engage with other community partners, and innovate ways to engage and train staff. To learn more about family engagement and STEM family engagement check out

<https://beyondschoolbells.org/resources/family-engagement.html>

~Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension

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