

DOE News Release
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Regional students again having fun with physics

More than 6,000 students from 90 schools in Idaho, Utah, Nevada and Wyoming are expected to attend the 17th annual Utah State University Physics Day event May 19 at Lagoon Amusement Park in Farmington, Utah.

The day-long activity is designed to be an educational approach to teaching fundamental physics concepts to middle school and high school students, using an amusement park as a laboratory.

USU Physics Day is an education outreach activity run jointly by the USU Physics Department and the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory. Other sponsors include Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center, North Wind Environmental, Boeing, Micron, S&S Power, Lagoon Amusement Park, ATK Launch Systems, the U.S. Navy, USU College of Science, USU Office of Recruitment and Enrollment Services, Rocky Mountain NASA Space Grant Consortium, Idaho NASA Space Grant Consortium, Mathsoft Engineering & Education, Inc., and a private donor in the name of the Literacy Council of Idaho Falls.

Participating Idaho schools are Bonneville, Century, Hillcrest and Twin Falls high schools, Burley Junior High School, the Greenleaf Learning Club and Idaho Distance Education Academy.

"It is great to see students having fun and becoming attracted to science and engineering. It is a great learning experience for everyone. As Leonardo da Vinci once said, 'Learning is the only thing that the mind never exhausts, never fears and never regrets,'" said Ali Siahpush, advisory engineer/scientist and coordinator of the event for INL.

The big change last year was the addition of the new Sky Ride contest--it was a huge success with 992 students participating. Students will also participate in a Colossal G-Force contest, physics bowl competition, student workbooks, and contests in demonstration design, ride design and logo design. The rides will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Physics Day events are scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Contest winners will be announced at an awards ceremony starting at 3 p.m. at the Davis Pavilion inside the amusement park. Last year, an estimated \$60,000 in prizes and scholarships were awarded to competition winners.

Physics Day is one of several programs at INL that encourages science education for students, thus ensuring a future work force that will further the long-term mission of INL.

INL is a science-based, applied engineering national laboratory, dedicated to supporting the DOE's missions in energy, national security, science and environmental research.

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