

Ruth Abeselom

Professor Duvall

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Reflection #3: The final 50 Hours

During the Newport News City Public Schools spring break, the iLab hosted a free GO TEC robotics Camp for 4th-6th graders. This week-long camp involved students learning the ins and outs of robotics: how to build, code, and drive to complete a variety of tasks and challenges. Then, at the end of the week, learners participated in a competition with the robots they built. It was definitely a great introductory way for students unfamiliar with hardware and mechanical technology to dive into the world of robotics and technology while having fun. To prepare for this, we had a big GO TEC cart with all the necessary supplies and tools to build and wire the robots. I primarily circulated the room answering questions and providing tech support while the students tinkered and built their robots. The process was almost natural for a few students, while some others needed more help. They were tasked with building a 4-wheel claw robot that could maneuver about and pick up small objects. It was quite exciting for them (and me) when they finished and were able to remotely drive their robots.

The week after the robotics camp, we cleaned up and organized around the lab and also prepped for the upcoming Innovation Summit at the ODU main campus at the Webb Center. I was tasked with operating the laser cutter to cut out over 200 little wooden drawings designed by the NNPS kindergarteners. Three fun little monster designs were picked out to demonstrate the final product of the kindergarten field trips we facilitate. The software utilized is CorelDRAW for the graphic design, as well as the Trotec Job Control laser cutting software.

In conclusion, my internship significantly enhanced my skills in STEM education, technical support, and cybersecurity recruitment. Through the GO TEC robotics camp, I engaged with diverse students and effectively delivered workshops, refining my community outreach abilities. Operating the laser cutter for the Innovation Summit deepened my technical knowledge and equipment handling skills. Overall, this experience met my learning objectives and prepared me to make meaningful contributions in STEM education and cybersecurity.

Pictured below is the finished claw robot by a 6th grader:

