4-H Robotics

By Cathy Suggs

Forty Lee County youth branched out of their animal science comfort zone this summer when Stephenson County Illinois’ Geeks in Sneaks 4-H Club brought 20 computers and 20 LEGO MINDSTORMS Robotic kits and conducted two workshops. As a result of the excitement generated by these robotic workshops, Lee will soon have its own robotic 4-H club. 4-H alumni who are engineer majors at Florida Gulf Coast University have agreed to partner with 4-H to start this club.

The club focus will help young people discover and develop a passion for science, engineering, technology, and math. There will be an annual robotic competition where teams will gain self confidence, develop people and life skills, make new friends, and hopefully discover a future career in engineering or computer programming.

The 4-H robotics curriculum features real-world challenges to be solved by critical thinking, construction, teamwork, and imagination. Youth will strategize, design, build, program, and test a robot using LEGO MINDSTORMS technology. They will apply real world math and science concepts, develop employment and life skills including critical thinking, time management, collaboration, and communication while becoming more self confident. Club, State, National, and International competitions will allow youth to become involved in their local and global communities.

So if you think 4-H is just for youth who have animal projects, bake, and sew, change that thought process and come check out the new robotic club starting in Lee County where youth discover that science is fun. If you would like to learn more about 4-H robotics or make a donation to help this club purchase the necessary equipment to reach more youth in Lee County, please contact Cathy Suggs at 533-7516.