

CITIZENS FOR NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS

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2019 Nuclear Blitz Reaches over 1000 Students

Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) was able to educate over 1000 students on the basics of radiation and nuclear fundamentals through their Annual Nuclear Blitz. This year 17 volunteers from CNTA and the American Nuclear Society – Savannah River Chapter visited 48 classrooms in 4 high schools across Aiken county in one week.

CNTA's Nuclear Blitz occurs in conjunction with the internationally celebrated Nuclear Science Week in October. The week is a chance to celebrate all things nuclear at the local, national, and international level. Events are held in cities across the globe, with many held here in the CSRA.

Classroom demonstrations were included with the lessons again this year. One of this year's demonstrations involved the use of a Geiger counter to detect radioactivity. The demonstration takes Fiesta ware plates from the 50s/60s that were coated with a glaze containing a very small amount of uranium, and teaches the students about the principles of time, distance, and shielding. Students measure the radiation being emitted from the plate with the instrument at different distances and with different shielding materials.

Another demonstration involved rope to visually show how much radiation people get from various sources in the world (manmade versus natural) by placing markings along the rope. The demonstration illustrates that, although we are exposed to radiation from a number of sources in our daily lives, the amount is quite small and very safe.

The instruction provided by the volunteers was well received. One of the CNTA young professional volunteers, Zachery Hein, taught lessons in 2 classes on Nuclear Chemistry at South Aiken High School and thought the whole experience was very positive. Zachery felt the students were able to get a better idea not only of some of the basics of nuclear chemistry, but also some historical insight they may not have had before. "I think the kids got a fundamental understanding of radiation as well as methods for safely handling radiation." He said. "I think they also got a greater historical insight into previous nuclear accidents and the real issues and faults that caused them."

Dr. Jim Marra, Executive Director of CNTA, noted, "The Blitz is one of the most enjoyable weeks of our year. The opportunity to interface directly with students and teachers and discuss how nuclear technologies impact our lives is great. It is also worthwhile to highlight the myriad career opportunities in the nuclear field that are available right in our backyard."

CNTA is an Aiken-based charitable educational organization dedicated to providing factual information about nuclear topics and educating the public on nuclear issues. For further information, visit us at cntaware.org, call CNTA at 803-649-3456, or e-mail at cnta@bellsouth.net.