



## CAMPUS NEWS

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### Teens Preview College Experience



Xiong-Chue Xiong works on a LEGO robot.



In the robot battle, the goal is to push the opponent out of the ring.



In the bridge building exercise, students test their design's strength.

To master the art of robot war, it helps to have strong armor, menacing claws, even a spinning nun chuck-like weapon. But if you really want to win a sumo wrestling-style fight, you need engineering prowess.

High school students from Fresno County learned that lesson firsthand when they spent a week at Cal Poly Pomona learning engineering basics through a variety of hands-on activities, including building and programming LEGO robots.

Through the College Awareness Program, conducted by the College of the Extended University (CEU) in collaboration with the College of Engineering, 38 teens experienced different aspects of university life -- learning from Cal Poly Pomona professors, living in the dorms, eating at Los Olivos Dining Commons and watching the Formula SAE West competition at the Auto Club Speedway. Students were sponsored by the Fresno County Office of Education, Migrant Education, Region 4. The weeklong activities, from June 22-27, were designed to get them interested in going to college and possibly study engineering.

If the robot fights were any indication, students were definitely interested.

For a final team project, they designed a robot and programmed its movements. During the competition, students whooped, hollered and cheered as each LEGO bot tried to push the other out of a black ring.

High school sophomore Rosa Hernandez said the activities have been interesting. "It's not what I expected it to be," said Hernandez, who lives in Huron. "I thought it was going to be lame. But it wasn't. It was cool."

At least four seniors said they want to apply to Cal Poly Pomona, which is good news for Jennifer McConnon, a consultant for the Migrant Education program in Fresno. "The whole idea is to expose them to university life, to get them to think about what kind of careers they want to pursue," she said.

This summer, about 145 high school and middle school students sponsored by Migrant Education Regions from around the state will come to campus for similar enrichment activities hosted by CEU to learn math, technology or business.

"This is the first time the College of the Extended University has offered outreach programs such as this," said Dr. Uei-Jiun (UJ) Fan, dean of the College of the Extended University. "Offering these programs to middle school and

high school students allows them to experience college life in an exciting way and opens their minds to opportunities for a bright and fulfilling future.

"We look forward to continuing our partnerships with the Migrant Education Regions and plan to expand these programs to meet the needs of other students as well."

During the same week, June 22-27, CEU hosted 24 middle school students from the Santa Clara County Office of Education, Migrant Education, Region 1. Through the Math Counts program, they improved their algebra skills and participated in hands-on activities.

In the coming weeks, a second group of students from Santa Clara County will also participate in the Math Counts program. Bakersfield City Elementary School District will send students to the Youth Entrepreneurship Program, where they'll learn about starting a new business and developing a business, marketing and public relations plan. Both programs will be held at Cal Poly Pomona from July 20-25.

For more information about the College of the Extended University, visit [www.ceu.csupomona.edu/home/index2.aspx](http://www.ceu.csupomona.edu/home/index2.aspx).