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Media Contact: Christie Lassen (410.313.7786 or 443.474.0740)
Victoria Goodman (410.313.7781)

Howard County Library System

Students Engineer Arcade Games, Race Cars, and Roller Coaster For First HCLS HiTech STEAM Carnival

Ellicott City, MD – Howard County Library System (HCLS) HiTech instructors, students, and mentors are working together to engineer a variety of fun arcade games and activities to be featured as part of Howard County Library System’s new HiTech STEAM Carnival. Up to 200 students, ages 11 to 18, are participating this summer in eleven different HiTech project-based classes that focus on applying STEAM related principles to the carnival projects.

The projects include transforming an out-of-date library checkout machine into a working video game console, engineering Skeeball alleys with scoring capabilities, and building a modified version of the classic carnival dunk tank. In one of the week-long classes students are using K'nex to build an automated 100 square foot, scale model of a roller coaster to be featured on-site at the carnival. In another class students are working to construct a horseracing game complete with horses that move as players compete by rolling balls to advance them in the race.

In partnership with the National Society of Black Engineers a feature attraction at the carnival will be a 800 square foot Ten80 raceway. The race course will be the venue for an ultimate racing challenge between teams of students who are working together to build six, 1:10 scale, electric radio-controlled cars. The Ten80 cars come in kits that can be set up in 4 million ways to encourage students to explore and learn how mechanical systems operate. The finished cars and their student drivers will thrill spectators on HiTech Carnival day as they compete.

The HiTech Carnival engineering classes, which began in late June and continue through the first week in August, are being held at four HCLS branches. The HiTech Carnival will be held on Saturday, August 10 from 9 am to 1 pm at the HCLS East Columbia Branch, 6600 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, Maryland. Refreshments will be available on-site for purchase. Rain date is Sunday, August 11, 2019.

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