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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release 17-06-26/001

June 26, 2017

AFTAC Airmen energize children at All SySTEMs Go event

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – For the second year in a row, members of the Air Force Technical Applications Center here volunteered to educate and interact with children attending the base’s “All SySTEMs Go” event at the Youth Center June 17.

The event, sponsored by the 45th Space Wing, is designed to encourage youth to become involved in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Airmen from AFTAC’s Innovation Lab, plus other scientists, engineers and technicians from the nuclear treaty monitoring center, educated scores of boys and girls of all ages about vacuum pumps, seismometers, and 3-D printers.

But the headliner that drew significant crowds was AFTAC’s high-voltage Tesla coil, which has the capacity to generate up to 250,000 volts. The wireless transformer created visual bolts of lightning synchronized to music, much to the delight of the children and adults alike.

Attendees seemed mesmerized by the fascinating displays, including Sebastian and Sofia Compton and their cousin Joseph Kriska who was visiting from Cascade, Washington.

“It’s all so interesting!” exclaimed Roxana Compton, Sofia and Sebastian’s mother, while touring Orlando’s Skeletons Museum of Osteology booth. “I never realized there was so much to a skeleton, and now I really want to take the kids to visit this place!”

Children were also treated to model rocket launches, building electrical circuits, radio-controlled robots and quad-copters, as well as green screen technology, infrared toys and various physics demonstrations.

“This event is a wonderful, unique experience for the children,” said Pam Jordan, 45th Force Support Squadron’s chief of Airman and Family Services. “All the vendors here, including the Airmen from our own units at Patrick, are experts in their respective fields and they really go above and beyond to make sure the kids have a great time, all while learning about science at the same time. We hope to continue this tradition well into the future!”

In addition to AFTAC's booth, there were 11 other interactive displays that captured the kids' attention, to include vendors from NASA, Harris Corporation, Keiser University, and many units from the 45th Space Wing.

"This is the second year we've held this event in an effort to continue to expose young folks from Brevard County to all aspects of STEM and get them to appreciate the importance of math and science," said Brig. Gen. Wayne Monteith, 45th SW commander. "I'm very pleased with the support from all the individuals involved in the program to make science fun for the kids!"

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