SparkFun Electronics to Host Electronics Workshops for Kids at USA Science and Engineering Festival

SparkFun Electronics will travel to Washington, D.C. for the United States of America Science and Engineering Festival (USASEF) to host its widely popular Simon Soldering workshop. SparkFun recently formed an education department to introduce people to the world of electronics technology and to explore the creative side of engineering and computer science through an exciting, hands-on learning experience.

Since mid-April the education outreach team at SparkFun has been touring the East Coast visiting various learning centers throughout the region. The tour is part of an initiative by SparkFun to branch out into new areas of the U.S. and promote the adoption of engaging and relevant open source technologies in schools. One of the final stops for the team is at USASEF on April 28-29 (http://www.usasciencefestival.org/2012festival/finale-expo/2012-exhibits?track=&age=&keyword=&category=&qexhibits=SparkFun&peek_friday=&no_page=1 [1]).

“We believe in revitalizing the imagination of today’s youth through tinkering and playing with electronics,” explained Lindsay Levkoff, director of education at SparkFun. “To promote constructivism and exploration in the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) fields, we are demonstrating that electronics provides a great medium for people to approach these subjects in schools. It provides students with an invaluable hands-on learning experience that not only boosts confidence, but incentivizes them to invent and create for the rest of their lives.”

At USASEF, SparkFun will run its popular Simon Soldering workshop, teaching people soldering techniques and skills. Participants will learn how to solder by putting together a functioning Simon Says memory game (http://www.sparkfun.com/products/10547 [2]). SparkFun will also bring the Lectro Candle Kit (an LED-based “candle” that cycles through the colors of the rainbow) and the Weevil Eye Kit (a DIY night-light and e-textiles kit that responds to how dark the room is). SparkFun will also be promoting its new education website (see SparkFun’s news announcement (SparkFun Launches Education Website) tomorrow for more information) designed to help educators and the general public approach electronics education, who may have no idea where or how to get started.

“As an open source company, we are encouraging people to reinvest in the process of technology, because we see the value of that kinesthetic sense of play in an education setting,” continued Levkoff. “At SparkFun, we’ve eliminated intellectual property costs by being open source and in turn our company makes electronics technology more approachable, affordable and accessible than ever before.”

To visit SparkFun at USASEF, visit the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. on April 28-29. SparkFun's booth (# 2045) will be located in Hall B. For more information about SparkFun's Department of Education, please contact education@sparkfun.com [3] or visit http://www.sparkfun.com [4].

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