EXTENSION PROGRAM

White Earth Reservation Academy

Summer fun in science, technology, engineering, and math

ACADEMY OFFERS CULTURALLY RELEVANT OPPORTUNITIES TO WHITE EARTH STUDENTS

Students learn modern science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through traditional American Indian stories and hands-on activities. Integrating western science and the Anishinabe way of life is critical to the program’s success. Reservation elders, University faculty, and students are all involved in teaching the students that math, science, and engineering are part of their daily lives. Weaving traditional skills and knowledge with modern science has energized community involvement. Every year, students have tested higher in science and math after completing the summer program.

WHAT WE OFFER

Topics in the academy range from gardening to rocketry. Classes are offered in a five-week summer program each June/July and through web-based lessons shared with students, teachers, and staff in the White Earth 21st Century after-school program during the school year. Two examples of the curriculum:

Rocketry: After participating in the academy’s Reach for the Sky program where students build their own rockets, students’ feelings that they would like a job involving science, mathematics, and/or engineering increased 103%.

Global Positioning Systems: The first session begins with tribal members describing how ancestors would travel through nature’s growing grounds, using traditional navigational skills such as following the sun or noting where moss grows on trees. Then, Extension educators show students how they can use satellite signals that pinpoint latitude and longitude to do the same thing.