



Education Matters *EXTREME* STEM Tour

Highlighting Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM)

Careers through Education Matters Partnership

Over 7,600 - 8th Grade Students & Teachers!



What is the Education Matters *EXTREME* STEM Tour?

It is a unique all inclusive tour for 8th graders to learn about STEM careers through behind-the-scenes tours in business and industry, while additionally learning about local post-secondary education and training through Catawba Valley Community College, the NC Center for Engineering Technologies, and the military. Each Middle School gets a full day of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) --- the experience --- **PRICELESS!**

How did it come about? As a recipient of a Golden LEAF Foundation grant, Catawba County Schools (CCS) was required to introduce 8th graders to STEM careers. With the Education Matters partnership in place, and over 160 business partners committed to supporting education, CCS contacted Education Matters to create a plan. Taking 8th graders into local businesses to meet people in various levels/positions, while getting to see the work environment, was an innovative way to introduce the students to STEM careers.



Students learn about the precision in machining at ZF.

With months of planning, and an “extreme” schedule the *EXTREME STEM Tour* was created. The goal was for 8th grade students to be more aware of local opportunities in STEM careers as well as the specific skills and training required. The students also learn the importance of taking higher levels of math and

science coursework while in high school to be prepared for postsecondary training or entry into a STEM career.

The first **Education Matters *EXTREME* STEM Tour** was such a success that the experience now includes all 8th graders in Hickory Public Schools, Newton-Conover City Schools and Catawba County Schools. Now in its fourth year, a special **EXTREME STEM Tour for K-12 Teachers** was added in June 2014 for approximately 100 teachers and administrators from 4 school systems.

Businesses partners who have participated in the **EXTREME STEM Tour** include ArcelorMittal, Benco Steel, Carolina Container, Catawba County EcoComplex, Catawba County EMS, CVCC, Catawba Valley Medical Center, Century Furniture, Charlotte Charter Jet, City of Conover Wastewater Treatment Facility, City of Hickory Water Facility and Wastewater Treatment Facility, Commercial Fabricators, CommScope, Concept Frames, Corning Cable Systems, CR Laine Furniture, Deluxe Printing, Duke Energy, Ethan Allen, Flowers Baking Co. of Newton, Frye Regional Medical Center, General Dynamics, Geiger International, GKN Driveline, Graystone Eye, Heritage Home Group, Hickory Business Furniture, Performance Food-IFH, HSM Solutions, Klingspor Abrasives, Kroehler Furniture, LEE Industries, Manufacturing Solutions Center, National Guard, NC Center for Engineering Technologies, Poppelmann Plastics, Sarstedt, Shurtape Technologies, Technibilt, Turbocoating, Vanguard Furniture, von Drehle Corporation, Western Piedmont Council of Governments, Williams-Sonoma’s Sutter Street Manufacturing, and ZF.

An initiative of Catawba Valley Community College, Education Matters develops partnerships with local school districts, the community college, four-year universities, government agencies, and business and industry to provide a comprehensive community-based approach to education and career awareness. Education Matters works with the partners to increase the value of education and educational attainment by helping students understand the importance of earning a high school diploma, plus the postsecondary education and training needed to secure employment in our region

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*Education Matters is an initiative of
Catawba Valley Community College*



CommScope



Sutter Street Manufacturing



CommScope



Ethan Allen



CommScope



HSM Solutions



Lee Industries

EXTREME STEM Tours provide the opportunity to recruit future employees (students) by telling 8th graders about career opportunities plus the training and education needed for various positions. The STEM Tours also allow companies to change the perception of manufacturing by allowing students into the work environment.