



## “DO THE MATH 2006” Engineering Field Day

By Michael Holroyd



Students attended both large group presentations and individual sessions of interest.

Who will design the bridges to help reduce our traffic problems? Who will figure out how to reach the most distant planets? Who will discover ways to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow?

Experience tells us educated and trained engineers will play a critical role in answering these questions and more. There is concern in higher education and corporate America however that we may not have enough “home grown” talent to fill the emerging job needs.

Decreasing interest among middle school and high school students in pursuing careers in engineering seems to support this concern. WSU Vancouver’s Center for Youth Workforce Preparation and MacKay & Sposito Engineering, Inc. formed a partnership to do something about it.

In early October 2005 planning began for the first “Do the Math: Engineering Field Day”. The idea was to present a half-day program featuring a collection of engineering “short courses” presented by professional engineers and WSU Vancouver faculty. The planners soon realized their modest goal of attracting 50 students was too low.

The response from local schools and engineering firms changed the target to over 200 high school students. The program expanded to offer 20 different engineering sessions for students to choose from.

Student Services staff from WSU Vancouver and Clark College provided information about courses of study, how to prepare for college, financial aid and more. Volunteers from the WSU Vancouver Student Ambassador program helped students and presenters navigate around the campus.

By the end of the day over 225 students left with complimentary tee-shirts, “goody bags” and enough information to help them start preparing for a career in engineering.

### FAST FACTS

- Over 225 students attended the “Do the Math” event; 211 completed program evaluation.
- Evergreen and Vancouver School Districts participated with the following high schools represented: Evergreen, Heritage, Hudson’s Bay, Mountain View, Skyview.
- WSU Vancouver and Clark College faculty and staff led sessions.
- Engineers from the following companies led sessions: MacKay & Sposito Inc., City of Vancouver, Precision Automation, Tiger Shop LLC, Kramer Gehlen & Associates, SummitBuilding Engineering LLC, US Filter, Linear Technology Corp., Nautilus Corp., Wafer Tech and Hewlett-Packard.
- Fifteen sessions, demonstrations and tours were included.