

Project: After School Science Minors Clubs
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Project Website: <http://www.msichicago.org/education/community/>

Project Categories: Programs, Staff/Professional Development

Primary Target: Youth Workers

How to Reach Primary Target: The Museum of Science and Industry Community Initiatives team partner with CBOs and school to provide training to informal educators(youth workers, parents, volunteers) in after school programs so that they can organize, lead and facilitate science clubs after school at their programs sites.

Secondary Target: Youth (Elementary)

How to Reach Secondary Target: The informal educators we train work with youth once or twice a week for 60 to 90 minutes after school facilitating hands on science activities.

General Demographics: This project serves underserved and underrepresented youth specifically African American and Hispanic populations in urban communities of Chicago.

Project Dates: 10/4/2008 - 5/16/2009

Evaluation Strategy: After each training session, participants are asked to evaluate the training through a feedback survey. Facilitators then debrief to determine if any immediate changes should be made to training for next sessions. At the end of the program year, all participating sites are asked to completed an online feedback survey.

Project Descriptions

Summary: In an effort fulfill our mission to help all children achieve their full potentials in the fields of science, technology, medicine, and engineering the Museum of Science and Industry Science Minors Clubs partners with schools and community based organizations to energize and equip them with innovative curriculum, training, and materials so they can offer and facilitate science clubs after school at their sites. Club members work in groups and pursue selected topics for five weeks and on the sixth week they have a culminating Family Day event at the museum. Topics selected are related to the health, the human body systems, genetics and DNA, engineering and many more.

Impact: The After School Science Minors Clubs project impacts our target audience because we provide them with hands on engaging science curriculum and training that is relevant to them and the students they

serve after school. For example, during the 2006-2008 school year, our participants mentioned that their youth need science education around healthy eating, living and the human body. With that in mind, we developed 3 curriculum models: Here's to Your Health(healthy eating), The Inside Story(body systems) and Blazing the Genetic Highway (cells and DNA) to address their needs. The students get to explore science in a totally different way than they do in their traditional school settings. Informal educators who participate in the program usually come to us with no little to no teaching experience and no science content knowledge. However, through our activities and trainings they learn that science is everywhere and that anyone can facilitate science in after school programs. The project impacts the target audience because many of them do not see the Museum as a resources and through this partnership they now see the Museum as a place for them. We offer 3 Family Day Events free of charge to all of the science clubs participants and their families and because of this component of the project we have more underserved populations visiting the museum.

Lessons:

The main lesson of this project is to share an effective model for community based organizations and schools to use after school to teach informal science education.