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Campus.News for the Week of November 6, 2006

Out & About: Rensselaer Celebrates National Chemistry Week

In an effort to excite children and their families about science and technology, and encourage them to consider pursuing careers in science, engineering, and technology, several programs in honor of National Chemistry Week were held for Capital Region students and on the Rensselaer campus Oct. 22-27.

To kick off the series of programs planned for the week, more than 500 area residents and their children attended the annual National Chemistry Day event held at the New York State Museum in Albany. The theme of the event, "Your Home — It's All Built on Chemistry," featured interactive demonstrations and hands-on activities, a chemistry magic show, and a student poster competition.


Approximately 11 area colleges and universities, student chemistry organizations, and area businesses participated in the event coordinated by Yvonne Akpalu, assistant professor of chemistry and chemical biology at Rensselaer, and the Eastern New York American Chemical Society Local Section.



Photos by Rensselaer/Steven Lucin



In addition, 15 elementary and middle school students from Arbor Hill schools had an opportunity to get a firsthand look at the field of the physical sciences during a weeklong, after-school science education program developed by Akpalu. The students participated in the Why Plastics? program that involved chemistry lessons, hands-on experiments, computer activities, and written exercises. The program was held Oct. 23-27 on Rensselaer's campus. *Why Plastics?* is a sponsor-funded program that provides hands-on science education, career development training, and enrichment activities to students from local and national school districts. The program was created to inspire historically underrepresented students, including African-American, Hispanic, Native American, and economically disadvantaged students, to pursue careers in science, engineering, and technology, according to Akpalu.

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