



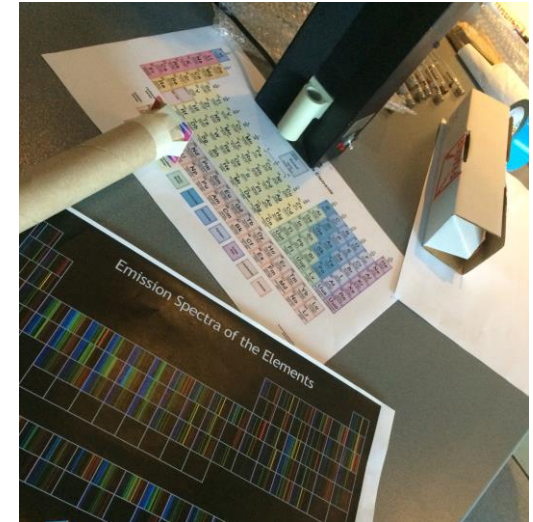
# Helio Nugget: Catawba Engineering Time

On Saturday, September 10, 2016, the Catawba Science Center in Hickory, NC, ran an "Engineering Time" focused on planets and exoplanets, a topic chosen based on patron requests. These events engage families in activities run by local engineers and scientists.

The NASA Goddard Astrophysics Education Team assisted with activity selection and provided long-distance professional development. There were three primary stations featuring activities from NASA's Afterschool Universe and Family Science Night programs: building a clay scale model of the Solar System, building spectrometers and using spectroscopy to identify elements, and building a model that represents the radial velocity method of exoplanet detection.

During the two hour event, approximately 100 people attended, including 35 children built and took home functional spectrometers. Surveys given to participants as they left the event revealed that 100% of respondents enjoyed the program and 40% were more interested in science, technology, and math after the event.

Catawba Science Center serves 7 rural counties of western North Carolina. In an effort to reach underrepresented audiences, CSC has established the "Portal To Science" program in which families that qualify for Medicaid or WIC only pay \$1 admission. Four "Portal To Science" families attended the event.



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