



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



ABOVE: Erin Pearson, sophomore from Barbers Hill High School and Divya Singh, freshman from IMPACT Early College High School, prepare to board their flight to Pennsylvania to attend the Bayer MaterialScience Camp.

LEFT: Divya Singh, freshman from Goose Creek CISD's IMPACT Early College High School, enjoys kayaking at the Bayer MaterialScience Camp.

Students Attend Bayer Camp

By Susan Passmore and Carla Rabalais

Divya Singh, 9th grade student at IMPACT Early College High School, and Erin Pearson, 10th grader at Barbers Hill High School, were among eight students from the United States and several students from Germany who attended a two-week long Bayer MaterialScience Camp at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania.

The camp provided hands-on group learning as well as social experiences. Students interacted with scientists, biologists and other employees from fish, boat and game commissions, state parks and universities. Students also had the opportunity to engage with researchers and biologists who study the Hellbender Salamander. Trips to Lake Erie and Niagara Falls made the camp even more rewarding for the students.

"This trip was a wonderful experience," said Pearson. "It taught me a lot about the wildlife around me and how important it is to preserve the creatures and plants in it. I feel very fortunate that Bayer allowed me to participate in this adventure."

Funding for the camp came from the Bayer USA Foundation, and the airfare was provided by the individual Bayer sites. Creek Connections provided chaperones and transportation. The camp was quite an experience for Singh, who plans to be a chemical engineer.

"I'm glad I was chosen because I'm really passionate about science," said Singh. "We had so many experiences! We went canoeing, kayaking, walking through the forest to look for wildlife, and to Niagara Falls and Lake Erie."

Another highlight of the trip was the campers' work on a research project over deer browsing. After studying leaves and twigs in the areas where deer had eaten, they identified the various species to determine what type the deer preferred. Since Bayer's North American headquarters for Bayer MaterialScience LLC is in Pittsburgh, the students presented their research on deer browsing to employees at the Pittsburgh campus, answering their questions.

"I appreciate Bayer for providing us with this opportunity. I learned so much," Singh said. "It was a lot of fun, and I made many new friends. One of my best friends now is from Berlin, Germany."

The camp whetted Singh's appetite for learning about STEM-related topics and helped prepare her for her upcoming pre-Advanced Placement Biology class. Although she would like to attend again, she wants others to have this experience.

"We were really pleased to sponsor two excellent students locally to participate in Bayer's science camp," added Bayer's Manager of Public Affairs Cherie Laughlin. "They are our future workforce, so it's great to see them have opportunities that enrich their education – and also help solidify their decisions to pursue S.T.E.M. careers."

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