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**Kaleidoscope
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Press Release

R.O.I. Reaches 1,000 Mid-Missouri Kids

The Kaleidoscope Discovery Center's Robotics Outreach Initiative achieves its goal of putting robots into the hands of 1,000 kids

Rolla, MO, July 25, 2017: This summer, the Kaleidoscope Discovery Center was awarded a grant of \$18,000 from the Community Foundation of the Ozarks and received five AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate positions for the purpose of exposing rural, low-income K-8th grade students to robotics. The Robotics Outreach Initiative, R.O.I., was formed from AmeriCorps volunteers of various backgrounds and skill sets. The R.O.I. team has spent the summer on the road, taking LEGO and Ozobot robots to events, teaching the basics of robotics and simple programming to children.

The KDC's Robotics Outreach Initiative was created with the goal of combatting poverty through educational empowerment, engaging not just the children, but also their parents and their teachers.

The Summer VISTAs used LEGO Mindstorms EV3 and WeDo robots, as well as the tiny Ozobots, teaching the children through the use of image and object oriented programming. By the end of the learning period, the children could control the robots on their own, using logic and math to make the Ozobots dance and the WeDos and EV3s pick up objects and navigate a maze.

Matthew Trimble, Eagle Scout and former AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate, was hired to supervise the team of Summer VISTAs that would bring hands-on STEM opportunities to the children of mid-Missouri who do not have transportation means to travel to Rolla or other big cities for STEM education. With two weeks to spare, R.O.I. achieved their goal, putting a robot in the hands of the 1,002nd student at the Lebanon 4-H club on Monday, July 24th. Matt Trimble said, "I'm very proud of my volunteers this summer. We all put in a hard effort, and I am very happy that we have not only reached our goal, but will surpass it."

The KDC began with LEGO Robotics, and the FIRST LEGO League Jr. teams have always formed the center of the KDC's programs. Robotics education has been shown to improve school grades and

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college attendance, as well as problem solving, time management, conflict resolution, and communication skills. Martina Baur, co-founding director of the Kaleidoscope Discovery Center, said, "It is so exciting to see what our community can do when everyone works together!"

The Kaleidoscope Discovery Center's mission is to provide hands-on learning experiences that advance the understanding and appreciation of engineering, science, technology, the environment, arts, and math (ESTEAM), and that inspire everyone to imagine, explore, and create a better world. Our vision is for our community to come together and create a fun and interactive science center where people are inspired to imagine a universe of endless possibilities.