

Families Explore Creative Play

September 22, 2012 (Smyrna, DE)

Children and adults attending the Delaware AeroSpace Education Foundation's fall Family Day used their imaginations and creative building skills to construct all sorts of wonderful structures, vehicles, and animals! Thanks to a grant from The Wilmington Flower Market, Inc. in Wilmington, DASEF was able to purchase an Imagination Playground. This fascinating new playground set was developed in New York City for use in city parks around the country. It gives children the opportunity to invent their own structures while informally learning about physical laws and the principles of design. The set is made up of two large rolling carts of a wide variety of shapes that are made of soft, lightweight, waterproof foam.



DASEF gave children a choice of three building challenges: an alien visitor's space vehicle, a machine from a candy factory, or a newly-discovered animal. After a short introduction of the challenge scenario, the "builders" went to work! They had ten minutes to construct their solution to the challenge. Then they explained what they designed and built, and had their photograph taken with their completed piece. More photos can be seen at DASEF's website. (www.dasef.org) The comments from the smiling parents, observing from a distance or joining their child in the challenge, were the finishing touch on this wonderful experience. "The kids and parents loved this activity!" said Rick Waterhouse, DASEF Programs Coordinator. "The children were so enthusiastic as they worked cooperatively with each other, and they took such pride in their finished product."

The Imagination Playground will make many future appearances at DASEF's Family Day and other special events. It will also get a workout from Delaware's public school children. The Department of Education placed the Engineering is Elementary® (EiE®) curriculum into all elementary schools statewide, beginning this school year. Ours is the first state to distribute the curriculum across all schools. Lessons let students focus on engineering, and technology, and science. That means there will be new "bridges" sprouting up in the State in the coming years – all brought to you by DASEF, Imagination Playground, and creative teamwork of our future engineers!

