WEEKLY RECAP

UPPER SCHOOL
SUMMER EXTENSION

WEEK 2
7/15/19 - 7/19/19

VERDI ECOSCHOOL
EST. 2016

Two of our new 2019-2020 educators, Ms. Angela and Dr. J joined us for summer extension! This week, they helped us with our projects and led our Thursday IRL lab. Next week, they will be taking over the summer program and leading it with Ms. Denise and Ms. Savannah there to help. Welcome to our school family!

STEAM CHALLENGE

MS. DENISE, MS. SAVANNAH

Each week during summer extension, we will be spending the first half-hour of the day participating in collaborative STEAM challenges as students arrive.

Week 2 Challenge: Build a boat that holds the most quarters without sinking.
Materials: 1 yard tin foil, 25 paper clips
Monday: Design/Plan
Tuesday: Build
Wednesday: Test
Thursday: Reflect/Revise
Friday: Makerspace Free Build

The kids were so invested in the boats and were able to deduce that the boats that had the biggest surface areas held the most quarters. They also did a great job converting their quarters into dollar amounts in the STEAM challenge reflections.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE: CREATING A FOOD FOREST

MR. JOSH

This week we focused on planting. Monday and Tuesday we planted the fruit trees and main nitrogen-fixing plants. Wednesday through Friday we focused on planting support species and reworking the banana oval. Our food forest is coming along and the kids are enjoying getting their hands dirty and seeing such big progress with their collaborative efforts!

DESIGNING AND BUILDING A CHICKEN COOP

MR. KRIS

What an incredible week! This week started with a curveball. Over the weekend our rabbits escaped a few times, so our attention focused on shoring up the rabbit coops first. One design a child illustrated suggested recycling the coop we currently have, and another student depicted a design where the original coop was cut in half with the two pieces setting side by side. We immediately began cutting the large coop in two. We also had plenty of other tasks to complete. Everyone had a chance to build and use power tools with adult assistance. Unfortunately we were so busy I didn't have time to take pictures of everyone working hard. We accomplished so much. So many of the projects around the school house are beginning to take shape and it feels like a complete circle. Take a walk down the left side of Highland House (where the rain barrels are!) to see all of our hard work so far.

INDIAN RIVER LAGOON WORKSHOPS

MS. DENISE, MS. SAVANNAH, MS. ANGELA, DR. J.

This week, the students were able to dive into the world of Elasmobranchs (sharks and rays!). Students learned about the anatomy and physiology of elasmobranchs, where they are active on the food chain and the environmental collapse that occurs when a keystone species (such as a shark) is eliminated from the food chain/web of life due to a population decline.

Students also conducted a very exciting (and wet!) species diversity and abundance study of the organisms in the Indian River Lagoon using various “catch and release” methods. Students learned how to use a seine net, a cast net and crab traps with turtle safe excluder devices. A lab report of the data collected will be completed during our final workshop week.

Students also created beautiful and thoughtful thank you notes to Squid Lips for partnering with us to allow this lab experience to happen. Squid Lips plans to put the student work on display to raise awareness of the fabulous students at our school and the types of programs that are offered.

In an integrated science, art, and math project, we started creating life-size drawings of elasmobranchs that live in the Indian River Lagoon using a gridded scaling system. We will complete our drawings and add color next week!