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# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

## SEVENTY-SIX STUDENTS TAKE PART IN ROCKET DAY AT PAR EXCELLENCE ACADEMY

**NEWARK, OHIO (July 11, 2019)** – The long-awaited Par Excellence Academy *Rocket Day* was a resounding success, as seventy-six youngsters learned about, built and launched rockets today. With the help of Owens Corning, OSU/Newark Advanced College of Engineering, Buckeye Space Launch Initiative, Bowing Corporationl, Blackfire Engineering and Par Excellence Academy's PTO organization, which hosted the event, youngsters, ages 5 to 13, built and launched rockets and learned about many aspects of the Apollo XI lunar mission, commemorating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this month.

The morning started with a series of presentations which included a 1:100-scale replica of Saturn V, the 100,000-plus pound rocket used during the Apollo XI mission. OSU/Newark Assistant Professor of Physics, Dr. Mike Stamatikos, showed the cut-away model and described the stages of the rocket and each one's purpose. Dr. Stamatikos discussed the type of combustion, thrust and speed needed to take famed astronauts Commander Neil Armstrong, Command Module Pilot Michael Collins and Lunar Module Pilot Buzz Aldrin on NASA's first manned lunar mission, which landed on the moon, July 20, 1969.

Owens Corning, who developed the material used in the space suits worn by astronauts on the mission, shared many items, including a sleeve and a helmet. Students not only learned about the harsh conditions and how the suits protected and provided utility to the team, but they were also able to see and touch the items. Other items included collection kits with gyroscopes, used to help the landing team of Armstrong and Aldrin battle gravity while performing their work on the moon's surface.

After this, students were divided into ten teams. With the help of the collegiate partners from Buckeye Space Launch Initiative, and other corporate partners, each team constructed two rockets, using materials provided by funding through Par Excellence Academy's Parent-Teacher Organization. "I was surprised that we actually got to launch the rockets we made. It was super fun doing that and making new friends," shared Lucas Wells, a sixth-grader who is a attends Licking Heights Central Middle School who found out about the event through attending CDF's Freedom School.

After lunch, each team also made Nerf rockets to take home, while the partners prepared the ten team rockets for launch on the outside launch pad. Students cheered their rocket on during the afternoon's two test launches, while observing how the wind affected their rockets' landing patterns. With the goal of landing closest to the launch pad, Team Red came out on top, at the end of both launches.

At the conclusion of the event, each child took home a certificate of participation, presented by PTO president, Cindy Quinn. “We had such a wonderful event today, and really couldn’t have asked for a better day or turnout,” Quinn shared. “Certainly, we cannot thank our corporate and academic partners enough for their assistance. We simply couldn’t have pulled off such an outstanding event without their well-coordinated help!”

In addition to the Par Ex PTO and teachers who attended the event, Par Excellence Academy wishes to thank and acknowledge the following individuals for making the event a success: Bill Riehl and the team from Owens Corning, Mike Stamatikos, from OSU/Newark, Ada Kanapskyte and the team from Buckeye Space Launch Initiative, Cindy Quinn from Blackfire Engineering, and Daryl Dickerson from Boeing Corporation.



**[LEFT]**

***Par Ex Second-grade instructor Mr. Chris Estadt helps Team Blue with their rocket construction.***



**[LEFT]**

***Students watch as the first test launch takes place in the green space behind Par Excellence Academy. Each rocket had a parachute strip that helped teams identify where their rockets touched down. Team Red’s rocket landed closest to the launch pad, making them the winners of the launch contest.***



[LEFT]

*Thank you to the amazing team of academic and corporate sponsors, pictured here, for their amazing support in helping Par Ex PTO plan and execute Par Ex's first Rocket Day!*

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