



## Robots, Engineering, and Sharks – Oh My!

Washington Park was the place to be on August 24<sup>th</sup> as 25 community partners lined the pathways of the park with educational and interactive STEM booths. Any direction you looked you would see a family engaged in STEM and the End of Summer / Back to School STEM Festival.

The festival is the culminating event for GCSC's Summer of STEM which focuses on keeping students engaged and excited about STEM in the summer months by providing partners with weeklong "camps-in-a-box". This is the second year GCSC has hosted a festival for families to encourage both children and parents to learn more about STEM.

Strollers waded through the booths stopping to learn how to code a robot, try out a VR headset, build a house out of Legos or touch a baby shark (do do). Children practiced standing like birds on branches, were exposed to different careers in the health field, and learned how topography or the potential of seismic waves affect building.

The idea of bringing STEM to families in an engaging and fun way was fueled by the fantastic community partners who spent their day at the event, you can look at the full list of partners [here](#). When reflecting on what part of the festival was most beneficial, one partner explained it was

*"meeting families and students who were eager to learn and try new things. These kids like to know how things work and are very hands on".*

Another partner shared that "this was a great way to celebrate the end of our summer programming and share the resources our organization has to offer the community". Sharing what STEM opportunities are available in the community for families is a great way to increase exposure to STEM concepts and careers to children.



Families also had the opportunity to enjoy lunch while watching performances in the bandstand at Washington Park. Know Theater performed Alice in Neverland, My Nose Turns Red showcased their unicycling, acting, juggling, and diabolo skills, Madcap Puppets engaged the crowd by performing The Great Space Caper. My Nose Turns Red also participated in the day as an exhibitor, teaching families a variety of circus tricks.

An estimated 400 people attended the event throughout the course of the day and rated it an average of 9.3 out of a 10 point. Families enjoyed the "different exhibitors, especially the aquarium" and seeing "children interacting with all the projects and booths".

GCSC is on a mission to create a robust STEM pipeline of talent to meet the demand for STEM jobs in the Greater Cincinnati area. The festival provided exposure to potential careers in STEM, helped families find programming opportunities in the area that fit their child's interests, and highlighted educational partners focused on STEM.

[See more photos from the event here](#)

