

Local students defy gravity at Jacksonville District Engineering Career Day



WRITTEN BY

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in partnership with The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) Jacksonville Post, hosted an Engineering Career Day event at the Downtown Jacksonville Main Library.

Engineering Career Day is an event that is held every February during National Engineers Week, which typically brings more than 100 students and teachers from Northeast Florida high schools together to compete in hands-on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) challenges. This year's event brought together a total of 26 teams from 9 different high schools together to participate.

The Jacksonville District Engineering Division Chief, Lauren Borocharer, delivered the opening remarks for the event, in which she highlighted the importance of Engineering Week and the positive impact it had on young students interested in pursuing a career in the engineering field.

“We want them to have a passion for what we do as engineers and scientists, and to seriously consider joining the workforce,” said Borocharer about the event.

The theme for this year's Engineering Career Day was “Don't Let Gravity Get You Down,” and was reflected in the two surprise problems presented to event participants in the form of an egg drop and water tower challenge. Teams were provided with construction materials and asked to create innovative solutions to the challenges presented.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District Commander, Col. Brandon Bowman, together with the overall winners of the Engineering Career Day event from Bolles High School. The event was hosted in partnership with The Society of American Military Engineers Jacksonville Post at the Downtown Jacksonville Main Library. (USACE photo by Mark Mosher)

Over 40 volunteers from the Jacksonville District participated in the event, providing guidance to students as they constructed their various design projects as well as participating as judges for the two projects presented to the students who participated.

Three engineers from USACE hosted an information panel in which they shared with students their experiences working for USACE, as well as how they entered the engineering field.

“Volunteering for this event has been important because it gives us a chance to be involved with students to show them how fun and creative engineering can be. I love how excited and intense the students get while working on their projects.

They take a lot of pride in their designs and they do a great job thinking outside of the box and coming up with neat concepts,” USACE planning committee chairperson, Amanda Marin, said about the event.

“Developing the projects is also a good challenge for us! Coming up with the project statements is the task that takes the longest every year and we go through multiple iterations of writing and testing. It’s fun to try to think of ways the kids could outsmart us, so it keeps us on our toes!”

Jacksonville District Commander, Col. Brandon Bowman, was on hand to present the top three teams with medals and the overall winners of the competition with a trophy that the winning school, Bolles High School, received from Col. Bowman to display until the competition next year.



Students test out their surprise challenge creation in the form of an egg drop. Teams were provided with construction materials and asked to create innovative solutions to the challenges presented at Engineering Career Day hosted by Jacksonville District and the Society of American Military Engineers. (USACE photo by Aaron Church)



Water tower challenge submissions created by students at Engineering Career Day hosted by Jacksonville District and the Society of American Military Engineers. Teams were provided with construction materials and asked to create innovative solutions to the challenges presented. (USACE photo by Aaron Church)

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