

2021 Cobb County STEMapalooza conference STARS Volunteer Service Hours Report and Verification

After STARS Team and Timber Ridge co-hosted together the 2021 Timber Ridge Crystal-Growing Competition, Mrs. Dunford invited us, STARS Team, to present at the 2021 STEMapalooza conference, the annual Cobb County STEM conference. We were delighted, and we immediately agreed.

As soon as school was over, Susanna Huang met with Mrs. Dunford online to discuss with her what types of information she would recommend for us to talk about at the conference. Because the conference is meant to spread note-worthy ideas to local enthusiastic teachers about science that could be easily applied in the classroom, Mrs. Dunford recommended for us to focus on three main advantages for hosting or participating in a crystal-growing competition or related activity: (1) Increased back-to-school social-emotional engagement, since crystals are beautiful and fascinating, which helps heighten social interaction, (2) Relative affordability and easy accessibility, since salt is a relatively safe and commonly found household material and because STARS Team already has all the documents and rules ready, no need to start from scratch, and (3) Enhanced scientific skills and exposure to the vanguard field of crystallography, since students can learn about the scientific method and the principles of crystallography.

With these three major points in mind, Susanna Huang held a group meeting for the STARS Team (Susanna Huang, Arya Oak, Grace Shen, Achyutan Narayanan, and Selina Huang) to start drafting the presentation (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IHcKjsjFmG1TCm7Ktv-4_ZMZTEuUJ_0CbPT6goJa-6l/edit?usp=sharing). With everybody working very hard for four hours across multiple days, the drafting was complete, and so we then started building the presentation. We all worked very diligently as a team, and it took everybody working together for three hours (<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/13BEfvCSTeHWO7kktOOe6i-1klRb84CrSlCpJ06t55QU/edit?usp=sharing>) to complete the presentation. The presentation title was called *From Idea to Reality: Scientific Competitions*.

With the presentation speaking notes and the presentation completed, the STARS Team met up with Mrs. Dunford to do a quick rehearsal for half an hour. It went very well, and on the next day, June 16th, STARS Team and Mrs. Dunford presented together at two STEMapalooza sessions, with each being 30 minutes long, explaining the importance of crystallography, and its significance for students K-12th. Many of the online Zoom audience teachers wrote kind, appreciative words in the chat as they left the Zoom session at the end of each presentation. One of the teachers was even Susanna Huang's previous middle school science teacher, and she was so very excited to introduce the crystal-growing activity to her own middle school in the following fall semester. We, STARS Team, were all so very glad that we had this amazing opportunity to share our ideas about the importance of crystal-growing activities for students' creativity and scientific skills. We will continue sharing our love of science with others, inspiring others and spurring creativity, kindling the spirit of scientific exploration.

Total Service Hours for preparing the presentation and presenting at the STEMapalooza conference

Susanna Huang (8.5 hours); Arya Oak (8.5 hours); Grace Shen (8.5 hours); Achyutan Narayanan (8.5 hours); Selina Huang (8.5 hours)

Reported by Susanna Huang

If the above may be correct, please sign below:

Timber Ridge STEM Lab Teacher – Mrs. Dunford

Date