

LETTERS

Destination ImagiNation long active in STEM education

There's a clear irony for me in the headlines these days.

While the media is widely reporting that legislators and school districts are struggling to find funding and resources to implement programs promoting science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), Destination ImagiNation, a leading global nonprofit, has been involving hundreds of thousands of youth in STEM for decades.

And, one of our strongest Destination ImagiNation programs is in Colorado.

Destination ImagiNation, the world's largest creative program for kids, every year involves student teams from the U.S. and all over the world in creative problem-solving challenge competitions that motivate them to develop creative, innovative solutions to problems that require them to apply all of the skills associated with STEM.

While they are learning these 21st century skills, they also are building their self-confidence and learning teamwork, communication, innovation and leadership skills.

Artistic expression and story-telling are integral components of each challenge.

All Destination ImagiNation (DI) challenges that connect to science, technology, engineering and math meet National Educational Standards.

And, a study last year by the University of Virginia concluded that youth who have been involved in Destination ImagiNation's challenge programs are more creative and better at problem solving than kids who have not experienced the Destination ImagiNation Program.

Destination ImagiNation (www.idodi.org) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that involves more than 100,000 youth on 15,000 teams in the United States, Canada and 16 countries around the world annually.

Each year, these teams have the opportunity to showcase their solutions at country and state tournaments, with some teams participating at the annual



At the STEM Magnet Lab School in Northglenn, students work on computers. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education is intended to keep the United States as an innovator and to prevent it from falling behind India, China and other fast-developing nations. (Denver Business Journal associate editor Bruce Goldberg wrote "Denver schools focus on STEM education" in the DBJ's Jan. 6-12 edition.)

Global Finals each May.

We have more than 1.5 million former DI team participants — alumni — who have gone on to be successful in business and in life. They largely credit DI for their success.

While the headlines indicate many in education and government are just discovering the value of STEM, Destination ImagiNation has known for years that kids who are exposed early to the STEM activities and problem-solving challenges have an advantage in getting into col-

lege and getting good jobs later on.

Employers tell us this often, and we have some of the nation's largest companies as our strategic partners.

Finally, Destination ImagiNation is the only extra-curricular program that ties back directly to the classroom, and complements and enriches what is taught in the classroom.

Chuck Cadle
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THE PULSE

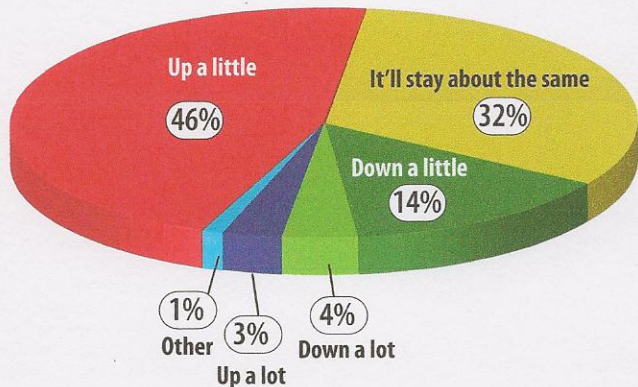
In last week's web survey, we asked:

Do you expect the sales value of your home to go up or down in 2012?

We received 466 responses.

This week's question:

The field of presidential candidates is narrowing. Which do you favor as of today?



This poll is not a scientific sampling, but offers a quick view of what readers are thinking.

To respond, visit our site at:
denverbusinessjournal.com