

15 September 2022

STEM Taster Day for Girlguides

The IOP were represented at the Girlguiding Staffordshire Unity 2022 Campon 18th August by members of the West Midlands.

Unity is Girlguiding Staffordshire's International Guide Camp which is held every 4 years with Unity 2022 being the 9th Unity held to date. Every camp they welcome girls from all over the world for a camp filled with fun, adventure, excitement and friendship. This year they hosted 613 girls (aged 10 to 16) from across Staffordshire, England, Wales, Kenya, Nigerian & USA. In addition, over 450+ adult volunteers gave up their time to support the girls and the camp across a range of roles.

The theme for Unity 2022 was "A World of Possibilities" looking at the world through the eyes of the Environment, Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths. During the week, there was an exciting programme of adventurous and creative activities, evening entertainment as well as the opportunity for participants to discover their own "World of Possibilities" provided by local and national organisations.

The IOP West Midlands branch were at the camp on the STEM Taster Day, 18th August and engaged with hundreds of girls during the day demonstrating hands on physics activities and introducing them and unit leaders to the [IOP's I am a Physicist Girlguiding badge](#).

Thanks must be recorded for the West Midlands branch members who represented the IOP at the event – West Midlands Branch Committee Chair, Lynne Long, along with committee members Mike Boden, Margaret and David Cross and Ian Kemp.



(L-R Ian Kemp, Lynne Long, Margaret Cross, David Cross, Mike Boden)

Over 600 girls attended the morning sessions along with another 600 girls during the afternoon. The guides had an opportunity to try a number of IOP experience activities including Tame Tomato, Cartesian Diver, Wobbly Stick, Colour Mixing and Blue Skies and Red Sunsets to name a few. The girls also had the opportunity to “meet a physicist”, therefore completing two of the elements of the I am a Physicist badge, with opportunities to complete the badge back in their guide units with their guide leader.

Mike, Secretary of the West Midlands branch said, “It was a great day - lots of energy and enthusiasm from the girl guides and all of the other visitors to the stand - I really enjoyed it - good to get out and talk face to face”.

Ian, also a West Midlands branch committee member, added, “It was a good day and definitely worth doing. Let’s hope it translates into many of the girls gaining the I am a Physicist badge and taking Physics for GCSE and GCE!”.

Lynne, who co-ordinated the IOP West Midland’s involvement said, “The guide leaders we met were very interested in taking up the badge with their groups if they hadn’t known of it, and the ones who had completed the badge with their groups were very pleased with it and said the girls really enjoyed completing it!”.



Over 800 girls have completed the I am a Physicist badge this year so far and, since it was introduced by the IOP East Midlands branch in 2019 over 20,000 badges have been issued to girlguides around the UK & Ireland and the world, as far afield as Singapore.

Julie Tanner & Alice Hopton the Joint Camp Leads for Unity 2022 said, “We are delighted that the day was even more successful than we could have ever wished for. We have never experienced having to “shoo” the girls out of any activity to go and have their lunch or tea - this to us shows a very successful event.

“The activities that you provided were excellent and engaged the girls in the way that we had hoped. This was much appreciated and hopefully you saw some potential employees of the future from within the various groups of Guides/Rangers that took part in your activities.”

