

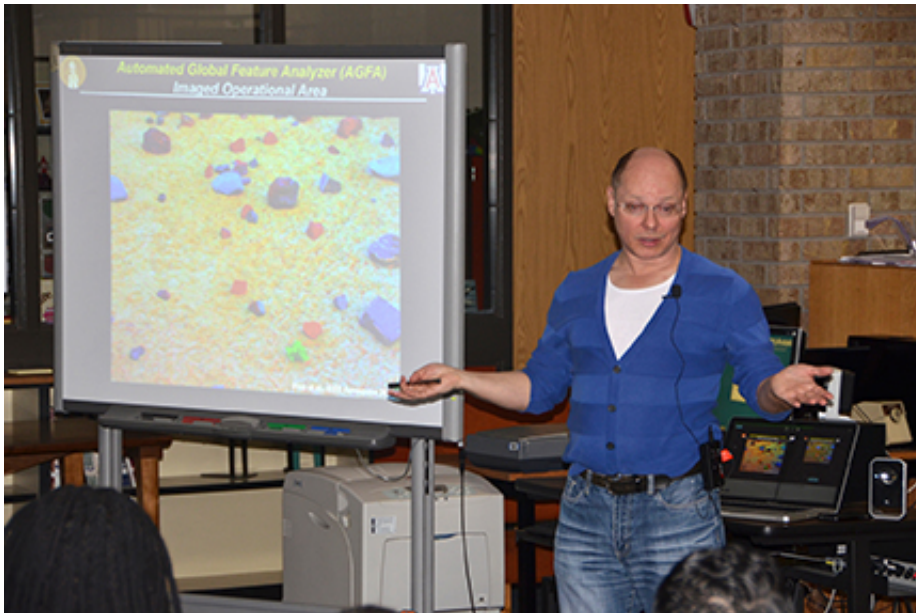
SCIENTIST ENGAGES CAMPBELL MS STUDENTS WITH STEM PRESENTATION

March 25, 2015

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Dr. Wolfgang Fink, accomplished scientist, teaches Campbell Middle School students about the automated global feature analyzer during a visit to the school on March 19.

March 25, 2015—Accomplished scientist Dr. Wolfgang Fink spent the day with Campbell Middle School sixth-grade students on March 19, helping heighten their interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) while in town for the 46th Lunar and Planetary Science Conference.

Dr. Fink, who founded the Visual and Autonomous Exploration Systems Research Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology in 2003, serves as an associate professor and microelectronics chair at the University of Arizona.

He shared several of his areas of research expertise with the Campbell students, including astrobiology, autonomy, biomedicine, computational field geology, evolutionary computation and robotics.

Students discovered Dr. Fink's current research on moons of other planets and how to determine if life is present on other planets. They watched clips of robotic space exploration expeditions led by Dr. Fink.

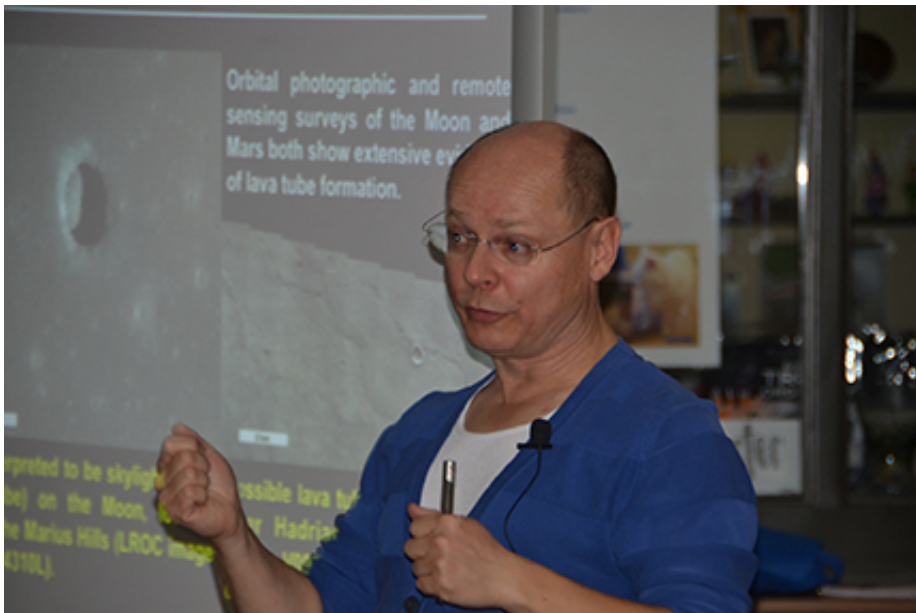
"I think it is extremely important to encourage STEM, which are important fields for the nation," Dr. Fink said. "You have to get the next line of scientists and engineers prepared. You have to encourage it, especially in middle schools. In elementary school, everyone is all about science, but in middle school, for some reason the interest fades away. Once you hit high school, the damage is done, and on the university side I get students who are not really interested in science. You have to keep the fire burning in middle school in particular to carry them into high school and potentially college."

Dr. Fink said he was impressed with the students' level of questioning and knowledge of space, geology and robotics.

"We strive for that engagement. It's not just dull boring calculations on the back of an envelope," he said. "You can build things, go out in the field and test things out. It's far more exciting than people might expect, and I think that clicked."

Dr. Cheryl Henry, Campbell principal, said the visit was a success.

"Our sixth-grade scholars were engaged and intrigued by Dr. Fink's presentation," she said. "His goal was to pique students' interest in the fields of STEM, and to ultimately increase the number of students to possibly enter college and career fields of math and science. It was a fabulous day!"



Dr. Wolfgang Fink explains the formation of lava tubes on the planet Mars to Campbell students.



Dr. Wolfgang Fink answers questions for Campbell sixth-grade students (L-R) Phuc Nguyen, Jonathan Cohn and Herbert Ventura following his presentation on March 19.

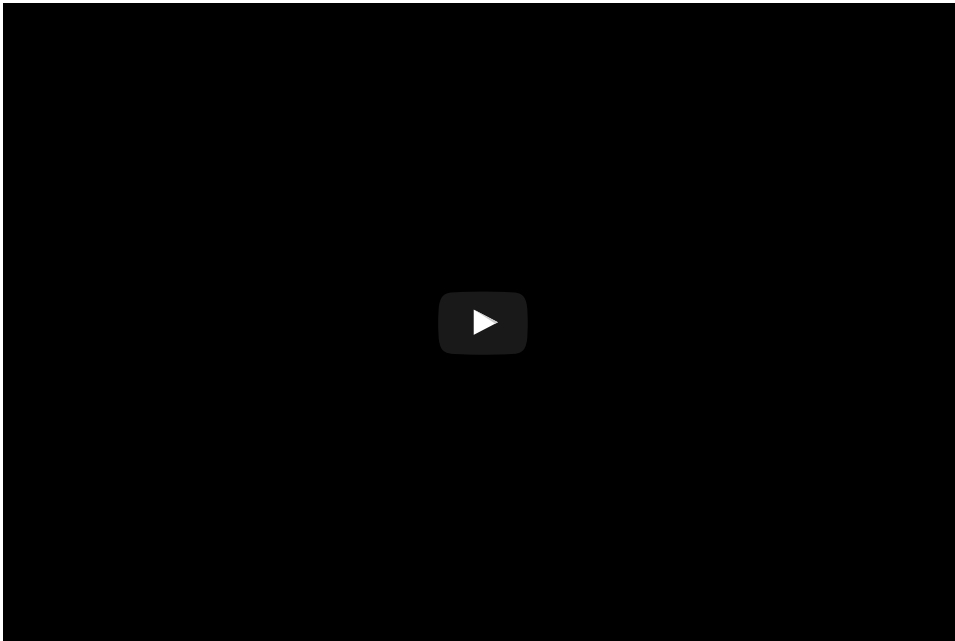


Dr. Ashley Clayburn, assistant superintendent of school improvement and accountability, left, and Dr. Cheryl Henry, Campbell Middle School principal, visit with Dr. Wolfgang Fink after his STEM presentation to students.



Campbell sixth-grade student Paige Clark asks a question to Dr. Wolfgang Fink following his STEM presentation on March 19.

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