

This is Miranda Mackrell, a student at Mid Valley and a Youth Ambassador for Remake Learning Days. On May 16, from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, I had the chance to attend STEM Family Fun Night at the Wayne County Public Library in Honesdale, PA. The event was part of Remake Learning Days 2025 and brought together families, kids, and educators for an evening of hands-on exploration and discovery.

STEM Family Fun Night was all about giving kids the chance to dive into science, technology, engineering, and math in a fun and approachable way. Through a variety of activities, they got to test out new ideas, build things, solve problems, and learn by doing. It was great to see how something as simple as building with LEGOs could turn into a lesson about real-world engineering or how a basic robot race could open up a conversation about coding and logic. These kinds of experiences help kids connect what they're doing to bigger ideas and real-life skills in a way that's exciting and meaningful.

What I really appreciated about the event was that it wasn't just about having fun—it was also about helping kids find what they're passionate about. By giving them the tools and freedom to explore, the event encouraged kids to take ownership of their learning. It's the kind of hands-on, engaging environment that lets kids step outside of the typical classroom routine and discover how learning can actually be fun. When you see kids laughing, working together, and proudly showing off what they built or discovered, you know something is clicking. STEM Family Fun Night showed just how powerful it can be to make learning feel like an adventure instead of a chore.

Before the event, I was really curious to see how the different stations would affect the kids—how they'd work through challenges, experiment with different ideas, and support each other. The library did a great job organizing the space with different STEM stations spread throughout the building. Each activity had clear instructions, but the kids were encouraged to explore and add their own creative twists. Volunteers and staff were nearby to help, but it was amazing how quickly the kids took the lead.

One of the highlights of the evening was the boat-building challenge. The kids were given a handful of materials—tin foil, popsicle sticks, tape—and asked to build a boat that could float and hold weight. I watched as kids built, tested, and rebuilt their designs, learning through trial and error. It was fun to see their determination and how they encouraged one another when something didn't work the first time. Moments like that showed how these activities build not just knowledge, but important life skills like resilience and problem-solving.

Another really cool station featured Ozobots, which are small programmable robots that you control with an iPad. The goal was to guide the robot through a racetrack made from pool noodles as quickly as possible. The kids were totally focused, tweaking their coding, trying different paths, and celebrating small wins along the way. It was a great reminder of how intuitive and creative kids can be when they're given the chance to explore on their own terms. And of course, the evening wasn't all STEM! There were also snacks—pizza and cookies—which helped create a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere. It felt more like a community gathering than a formal event, with parents joining in and enjoying the experience alongside their kids. That family involvement made the whole night even more special.

After reflecting on everything I saw, I think what stuck with me the most was the long-term impact an event like this can have. Tracy Shwartz, the library director, said her goal is to “light a spark” in these kids—something that will inspire them to keep exploring, keep asking questions, and maybe even pursue careers they hadn’t thought about before. She believes, and I agree, that these events can open doors for kids, helping them build confidence and discover new interests. Tracy mentioned that meeting new families and creating those moments of discovery is her favorite part of what she does—and that really came through in the way the event was organized.

Attending STEM Family Fun Night reminded me how powerful hands-on learning can be, especially when it’s made fun and accessible. Thanks to the effort of the Wayne County Public Library and leaders like Tracy, events like this are helping shape a future where learning is exciting, engaging, and driven by curiosity. I’m so glad I got to be a part of it and see firsthand how something as simple as a community event can leave a lasting impact. To learn more about the Wayne County Public Library, visit www.waynelibraries.org.

Learn more at remakelearningdays.org. For Remake Learning Days, this is Youth Ambassador Miranda Mackrell.