

Summary

The Air & Space Forces Association, Wright Memorial Chapter (AFA WMC), supports STEM education that impacts individual development, workforce readiness, and national progress. Encouraging STEM education at the K-12 level fosters a pipeline of future scientists, engineers, and inventors who contribute to technological advancements and economic prosperity. Our targeted support ensures that students of all backgrounds have the chance to develop skills that lead to upward mobility and lifelong success.

In the following article, Carl “Shof” Shofner, AFA WMC’s VP for Aerospace Education, chronicles his visit to the Spinning Hills Middle School and how they used the STEM grant we provided – and it’s a pretty compelling story of how our grant can have such a major impact.

These grants would not be possible without the amazing support of our corporate and AFA WMC corporate community sponsors – an exceptional group of businesses listed on our [AFA WMC Website](#).

Enjoy!

STEM Grants – Having a Positive Impact

by Carl “Shof” Shofner

Here is another example of your WMC Chapter 212 education funds in action. Pictured here is the drone practice course at Spinning Hills Middle School. And if you look closely you can see a drone going through its paces, upper center of the picture above the blue obstacle.

On this evening most of the 6 person drone team was out due to sickness or other commitments. But I was able to witness two young ladies, one fifth-grader and one sixth-grader, as they experimented with different sets of coded instructions trying to fly the drone through, under, over, around obstacles and ultimately through an opening in the box on the floor. Their tenacity was inspiring.

One was the “pilot” modifying the code and starting the program. The other was the “flight engineer” retrieving the drone, orienting it for the next flight and taking notes. There was a lot of trial and error, but never any give up. They were mentored by two teachers who did little more than encourage them, the problem-solving needed to be done by the girls.



By far, the most exciting and rewarding moments came when I heard these young ladies talk about “pitch,” “yaw,” “roll,” and “power,” and how they expected their changes to the code to affect the flight of the drone. How cool is that?! I didn’t even ponder flight dynamics until I joined AFROTC. For me personally, watching these two young representatives of a team talk about and exploring the dynamics of flight was worth every penny of our chapter’s investment. And remember, they do this twice a week and there are four more just like them.

CONGRATS to Spinning Hills for their support of students and STEM!