

# Showing off their expanded horizons

Horizon Science Academy students display their work at Thursday show

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 The Chronicle-Telegram

LORAIN — Thursday's Horizon Science Academy Academic Showcase was designed to boost student's self-esteem and student enrollment.

When Horizon opened in 2009, it had about 90 students, according to Jayson Bendix, dean of students. The kindergarten through 10th grade school at 760 Tower Blvd., now has 545 students and plans to add 11th and 12th grades in the 2016-17 school year.

Horizon is a charter school with a focus on math and science. Charters are privately run, publicly funded schools. Horizon is managed by Concept Schools, an Illinois-based non-profit charter operator managing 30 schools in seven states across the Midwest, according to its website.

Bendix said the showcase demonstrates Horizon's commitment to excellence, and he hopes parents considering sending their children to Horizon will take notice. He said Horizon's curriculum is designed to prepare students for college and build a strong relationship between students, parents and community residents.

"Our doors are open to anybody, and we have a very good support system in place," Bendix said. "We still have some ways to go, but we look forward to our school continuing to improve. And at the end of the day, we really believe it does take a village to raise a child."

The showcase included an anti-bullying information booth, dancing, karate math — in which students combine calculation with karate exercises — and a robotics demonstration. The demonstration featured students controlling the movements of a miniature four-wheeled robot that used a shovel to pick up and drop plastic blocks into a basket and use the robot arm to turn a flagpole crank and raise the Horizon flag.

Teacher Usonbek Jusupov, who runs the nine-member, ninth-grade robotics class, said the exhibit is designed to teach students skills in computer hardware and software. He said students initially struggled when they began the project in November, but their comprehension improved as the class developed.

Jusupov said students came in on snow days to work on the project. "They're really motivated," he said.

Ninth-grader Jalacia Smalley said the project increased her interest in pursuing a career in engineering.

"It's really fun," she said. "I learned a lot, and it can help me a lot more in the future."



STEVE MANHEIM / CHRONICLE PHOTOS

Michael Watchorn works on a painting in the style of Monet at the Academic Showcase on Thursday. Students presented a variety of projects, games and interactive activities from science, math, language arts, social studies and art and after-school classes.



**LEFT:** Jalacia Smalley, a ninth-grader at Horizon Science Academy in Lorain, displays a Spartan robotics team demonstration, with a robot raising a flag, at the Academic Showcase on Thursday.

**RIGHT:** Aylisa Grenald, a ninth-grader at Horizon Science Academy, explains her diorama for the book "In a Glass Grimmly," which is a reading project.