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Air Camp is expanding its schedule to offer two sessions this summer in Dayton, Ohio, following its successful launch in 2010, when middle school students came from across the U.S. to attend the inaugural session. Air Camp is designed to engage students in the wonders of flight and the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) of aviation and aeronautics. The University of Dayton campus serves as the host facility for housing and meeting space.

Air Camp is an intensive experience in STEM learning that provides hands-on experiences and the opportunity to explore behind the scenes at the area’s major aviation and history sites, including the Air Force Research Laboratory, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, Dayton History, and the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery. Students receive flight training at Sinclair Community College, co-pilot a plane at the Dayton-Wright Brothers Airport, and experience the full range of aviation operations.

“Our greatest resource in the United States is our young people. Their creativity and problem solving are the keys to our country’s future,” said Thomas Lasley, Air Camp president, University of Dayton professor of education and executive director of Learn to Earn Dayton. “Air Camp is a STEM-focused, high-energy program that allows young people to explore who they are as STEM learners and what they might become as STEM professionals.”

The students who participated in the first Air Camp were enthusiastic.

“Flying in the plane was the best experience of my life,” said one student. “This was an amazing event I’ll never forget!”

Another student observed: “I don’t think I’ve ever been so happy with myself. Making it into Air Camp is one thing, Experiencing it is a whole other ball game! Thank you ever so much for giving me the experience of a lifetime!”

The 2011 summer sessions will run June 26-July 1 and July 10-15. Each session will include 40 students, who will be chosen by a competitive application process. Applications are being accepted online through April 25 for students entering the seventh through ninth grades in fall 2011. Tuition is $995, with a limited number of need-based scholarships available.

Sponsors already committed for 2011 include the University of Dayton, Sinclair Community College, Wright State University, the United States Air Force, the Engineering and Science Foundation, the Mathile Family Foundation, the Turner Foundation, Teradata and InfoSciTex. In addition, UBS Baller Financial Group is leading an initiative with Dayton-area technology and defense contractors to increase support for student scholarships and mentorships in the camp’s second year.

For more information, call Air Camp Executive Director Tom Severyn at 937-304-5264.