

Disney engineers tinker with toys to inspire kids and families at annual local STEM event

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., Jan. 17, 2018 - Disney Cast Members and Imagineers are known for their creative imaginations and innovations. But one may be a little surprised to learn the very things children play with every day -- toys - have inspired some the most beloved theme park attractions.

So, to spark the imagination and creativity of children and families at the Orlando Science Center's 2018 Otronicon event this past weekend, Disney VoluntEARS "tinkered with toys" to show how science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) has unleashed a world of fun and magic at Disney.

Participants enjoyed exhibits that included an augmented-reality experience midway game inspired by Toy Story Mania! and a unique glimpse of the Slinky Dog Dash coaster opening this summer in the new Toy Story Land at Disney's Hollywood Studios.

"Every new Disney attraction relies on innovative technology that elevates our storytelling in even more creative and compelling ways," said Dennis Lind, vice president of Walt Disney World Design & Engineering. "Our VoluntEARS had just as much fun sharing their enthusiasm as the Otronicon participants did in our interactive exhibits."

Otronicon is one of many ways Walt Disney World Resort supports the Orlando Science Center, a Disney Grants recipient that furthers awareness of STEM principles and careers.

"Otronicon is our most popular event at Orlando Science Center, attracting about 15,000 people each year," said JoAnn Newman, president and CEO of Orlando Science Center. "The support of Disney's VoluntEARS who are in STEM-based roles at the event really shine a light for local youth on the exciting possibilities of a high-tech career."

For the past seven years, Walt Disney World Cast Members have eagerly VoluntEARED at Otronicon.