

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Educational Complex Students Teach Parents Science At Family Lab Night Event

Education / **Published On May 29, 2015 09:32 AM /**

Staff **May 29, 2015**



ST. CROIX – From a physics project featuring a giant paper rollercoaster based on a popular video game to a chemistry experiment that revealed the acidity level in local tap water is significantly lower than levels found in popular bottled-water brands, St. Croix Educational Complex students presented a host of unique science projects at the first Science Exhibit and Family Lab Night held May 26 at the school.

According to a press release issued by the Department of Education, parents and community members attended the nighttime event to learn fun science concepts from students, who presented lectures, conducted experiments, engaged in survival training techniques and played games—all with the goal of showing the presence of science in

everyday life.

In her experiment titled “Can the Chemicals In Windex Affect Plant Growth,” 16-year-old 11th grader Ki’Anna Watson discovered that two of the main active ingredients in the household cleaning product—propylene and ethylene glycol—extract water from plants and break down their cells. This, Watson said, may cause plants to die.

Maurice Sealey, a parent attending the event, was impressed with Watson’s work.

“This is real science,” he said. “I didn’t expect that a product we use everyday could be so damaging to plants.”

Gemma Y. Bognot-Dijamco, Ph.D., science teacher and department chairperson, said the event is in line with the science department’s commitment to project-based learning and its purpose was to get students excited about science.

“Kids are sometimes afraid of science, but if they can take ownership of something they have done in the classroom, it helps to reinforce their learning,” she said. Furthermore, Dr. Bognot-Dijamco said when students partner with their parents in the educational process, students tend to learn more.

William Coles, Ph.D., an employee with the Department of Planning & Natural Resource Fish & Wildlife division, could be seen teaching students archery. The activity was ideal to reinforce physics concepts of projectile motion, trajectory and aim, according to Physics Teacher Joann Lewis.

Family Lab Night was the third in a series of events the school hosted this year in an effort to put a greater focus on science. In January, a Sci-ma-thon was held in conjunction with the math department and a “Science Meets Culture & Music” event was held in March.