

Tualatin ABC Team Advances Project Goals



BY **BETHANY WURTZ**, TUALATIN ABC COMMITTEE

Tualatin, Oregon is thrilled to be one of the top eight teams to advance to the ABC Finals! We've had much press coverage, and even more community pride knowing that we can advance our innovative Mobile MakerSpace (MMS) project on a much faster timeline with the \$100,000 prize.

Our ABC Team started immediately planning for the creation and deployment of the Tualatin MMS. We will be purchasing our trailer in July, have the interior retrofitted soon thereafter, design the exterior logo/artwork through a community-wide contest, and have it stocked with equipment by the end of September for use in the schools and throughout our community!

Oregon has one of the shortest school days and one of the shortest school years nationally. Tualatin has changing demographics, too. As a community – businesses, government, schools and

non-profits – we want to spark an interest and make STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math) related learning opportunities accessible to all, especially for lower income children.

This process has been constantly evolving because we're involving multiple entities (e.g. school district, city, library, and businesses) in the creation of the MMS. One of our challenges has been coordinating and financing these efforts. Due to the scope and cost of implementation for this project, we've decided to change our team structure to include two teams instead of one, and we've transitioned from using a consultant to hiring a part-time Project Manager, Bethany Wurtz. Another course change to date is that we've discovered instead of a classroom-on-wheels, it would be better to use modular carts (made



Volunteers from the Tualatin ABC Team and Library show kids that being a Maker can be fun.

mobile by a trailer) that can be rolled into schools, libraries, parks and neighborhoods. We feel this would provide more flexibility with projects, and be more fiscally sustainable.

Some of the opportunities identified and momentum gained has come as a result of our Core Implementation Team (CIT) which has been working hard to make new contacts for financial donations, equipment or for volunteers. Our larger Steering Committee is working on assisting with the “making” of our MakerSpace, curriculum development, creating online scheduling tools, marketing and media outreach. We've identified a bilingual MMS staff member and delivered our first public Maker event in June. There is a tremendous amount of STEAM momentum in Oregon and nationally – it's an exciting time to be working on this project!

If you would like to know more about how you can help Tualatin win one of the final three prizes of \$1, \$2 or \$3 million, please contact Bethany Wurtz at info@tualatinabc.org or visit our website at TualatinABC.org.

