



The David W. Ihrle Smart Community STEM Camp Memorial Fund

VISION: Spark life-long passion and curiosity about Science, Technology, Engineering and Math in students, furthering student talent and cultivating their awareness of emerging technologies and exposing them to myriad opportunities to honor David Ihrle and his dedication to others.

MISSION: Provide STEM education and emerging technology exposure to high school students at the annual camp so that they can return to their communities as paid interns and Mentors for middle and elementary school students within after and out of school programs.

- Achieve our mission through our existing affiliation with the Smart Community STEM Program and collaboration with public school districts and others within each ecosystem such as Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Virginia.
- Provide funds for the annual Virginia Smart Community STEM Camp and After School Program, now in its fourth year. The annual camp hosts 32 high school students and focuses on providing well-targeted opportunities in the realm of experiential and scientific learning that are then followed up with mentorship opportunities. After attending the summer camp, students return qualified to establish and lead Drone Clubs within their communities, spreading exposure, knowledge, and enthusiasm for emerging technologies and opportunities in STEM.
- Currently, the Smart Community STEM program is engaged within five public school districts in collaboration with School Administration, Boys & Girls Club, Tuskegee Airmen Inc, and YMCA as well as collaboration with the Department of Defense Education Activity. The Smart Community STEM Mentors represent two Virginia Governors Schools, two Virginia Lab Schools, seven High Schools, thirteen Middle Schools, and three Elementary Schools.
- Mentors from the program have gone on to attend George Mason University, Old Dominion University, University of Oklahoma, and Virginia Tech with studies including Criminal Justice, Forensic Science, Mechanical Engineering, and Smart & Sustainable Cities. Many have returned to support the annual camp.
- The David W. Ihrle Memorial Fund will support the growth and sustainment of Drone Clubs within the current public-school districts such as the City of Petersburg, Orange County, and Stafford County as well as expansion of Smart Community STEM throughout Virginia and the mid-Atlantic region. Discussions are already underway to reach the Virginia Peninsulas and Virginia's Blue Ridge as well as North Carolina.
- SMART Community STEM was founded by George W. Hinckley, President & CEO and the late David W. Ihrle. Dave wanted these camp programs to thrive and to expand. He recognized that Smart Community STEM can serve to further student talent in mathematics, science, and engineering and facilitate strong connections with potential career pathways.