

What's happening

Through Sept. 30

■ The third annual "Best of Davis" photo contest takes place during the month of September. Participants enter in one of three age categories: 6-11; 12-17; and 18 and up. Visit <http://www.cityofdavis.org> for contest rules and how to enter.

Saturday

■ The Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival invites students in grades 6-9 and their parents to explore intriguing, accessible mathematical activities during a program sponsored by Da Vinci Charter Academy from 9 a.m. to noon.

The event's collaborative, non-competitive atmosphere offers an alternate setting for students to explore the joys and power of mathematics with other kids and older mentors. Activities will take place in the indoor commons at Emerson Junior High, 2121 Calaveras Ave.

The cost is \$10 in advance or \$25 at the door and scholarships are available. To learn more and to register, visit <http://juliarobinsonmathfestival.org/register.html>.

Monday

■ The Davis High School snowboard team will have an informational meeting at 7 p.m. in the DHS library, 315 W. 14th St. The snowboard team is open to all ninth- through 12th-grade boys and girls. Any interested athletes and parents are welcome to attend.

Tuesday

Interested in archery, geocaching or sewing? How about beekeeping, cupcake decorating or making cigarbox guitars? Those are just some of the activities available to youths participating in 4-H. Learn more at a 4-H informational meeting beginning at 7 p.m. at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St.

4-H is open to youths ages 5 to 19 and offers three clubs in Davis: Golden Valley, Norwood and West Plainfield. Youths and parents can learn more about all three clubs and the activities they offer at the information night.

Thursday, Oct. 1

Is the DHS Ski Team right for you? If you are at least an intermediate skier and are interested in ski racing, come find out more at the informational meeting at 7 p.m. in the Davis High School library, 315 W. 14th St. Interested ninth-through 12th-graders, parents and guardians are invited to attend. If you have questions, email Tanya Perez at tanyahp88@gmail.com.

Wednesday, Oct. 14

Cub Scout Pack 75 will hold its first pack meeting of the school year at 6:30 p.m. in the multipurpose room at Birch Lane Elementary School, 1600 Birch Lane. All interested parents and boys in grades 1-5 are invited to attend.

Friday, Oct. 16

Students in grades 7-9 are invited to a teen dance at the Veterans' Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St., from 7 to 9:30 p.m. The cost is \$10 and activities include a DJ playing dance and hip-hop music, video games, board games and more. For more information, call 530-757-5626.

Thursday, Jan. 7

Nominations for the awards of Davis Golden Heart Awards are due at 5 p.m. at City Hall, 23 Russell Blvd. The awards honor local junior high and high school students who have significantly contributed to their community as well as those who have overcome personal challenges.

For more information or to nominate a deserving youth, call 530-747-5863 or visit <http://www.cityofdavis.org>.



Seventeen members of the world-champion Citrus Circuits robotics team enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to Japan in August, courtesy of team sponsor DMG Mori. Team mentor Michael Corsetto, second from left, works at DMG Mori in Davis and chaperoned the students. During the trip, team members met with many DMG Mori executives, including Mr. Shirotori, center, general manager of machining technology at DMG Mori's global headquarters in Tokyo.

COURTESY PHOTO

Robotics team gets up-close look at manufacturing in Japan

By Kellen Browning
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

While many Davis High students were relaxing at home over the summer, Citrus Circuits robotics team members were broadening their cultural horizons with a trip to Japan.

Fresh off a victory at the world championships in the spring, the team was invited by sponsor DMG Mori, a Japanese-based manufacturing company with a plant in Davis, on an all-expenses-paid trip to company factories in Japanese cities Iga and Nara.

Seventeen team members, led by senior team captain Sophia Stockburger and chaperoned by Citrus Circuits mentor Mike Corsetti — who works for DMG Mori — flew into Osaka on Aug. 2 and left the country five days later, squeezing in as much sightseeing as possible. Stockburger said the visit was DMG Mori President Dr. Masahiko Mori's idea.

"They've sponsored us for

the past few years ... we held an event at their location (in Davis) and we also did a presentation to Dr. Mori when he came to Davis," she said.

"Between all of those things we were kind of on the radar more.

"And so then when we won world championships, Dr. Mori decided that he wanted to bring us, mostly to see Japan and the industrial production and factory production there."

The team saw two DMG Mori factories, as well as the company's global headquarters in Tokyo, and also was invited to tour a plant owned by robotics and manufacturing company FANUC, which Stockburger said frequently partners with DMG Mori.

"That was the first time (FANUC) had done a tour for a group that wasn't a customer, so that was a big deal," she said.

Stockburger said the team saw demonstrations of how different machines worked and learned how they were created.

"We got to see all of the

different steps in the process of assembling certain machines and how they refine certain parts of the machines so that they're perfect," she said.

Though Citrus Circuits members spent much of their time in the factories, they also had the opportunity to experience Japanese culture, and visited a different temple every day.

"It was really great to see a different culture and especially the workforce in a different culture," Stockburger said. "I'd never been anywhere but North America before so that was really exciting.

"Everything in Japan is very, very orderly and very, very clean, and I personally liked that a lot. I know a couple of kids came away from it saying that they wanted to potentially live in Japan later in their lives, or work there."

Stockburger thinks the trip had tangible benefits as well.

"Definitely it also got our students on the radar of those two companies," she said. "The executives at FANUC who

were greeting us and presenting to us about their company said that if (at) anytime we wanted to come back and talk to them more than we could."

Megan Yamoah, Citrus Circuits' senior vice captain and mechanical design lead, whose mother also chaperoned the expedition, enjoyed immersing herself in Japanese culture — she particularly appreciated the cuisine — and said that the trip was significant for many team members.

"I think for a lot of us it really put what we do in robotics in perspective, because we actually realized that all the things we do are directly applicable in industry," Yamoah said.

"It really broadened our perspective on machine industry and mechanical engineering in general. ... I know a lot of people were (inspired) to do engineering because of the experience."

— Kellen Browning is a student at Davis High School.

Essay supplements take time, effort

Remember when commercials were flooding the airwaves and that catch phrase "But wait, there's more!" was frequently quoted? Well, it is quite apropos when explaining the college application process for the 500 or so colleges on the Common Application.

After filling in all the data about yourself — your activities, majors, letters of recommendation and completing the main essay — you'd think you'd be done. But wait, there's more! Supplements.

Not to be confused with a vitamin boost, supplements are additional questions or essays that are school-specific. As discussed in my column from May 2013 — www.davisenterprise.com/?p=333355 — all Common App schools accept the same main essay, but many schools also require supplements. These are questions that the colleges themselves decide they want you to answer, and they can add quite a bit to your application workload.

Supplement questions range from fill-in-the blank to short-answer to lengthy essays. Some schools have none (Northeastern and Willamette) while others have several (Occidental and Stanford), and still others ask for a résumé or a writing sample (Amherst). Although there is quite a bit of variety in questions, some general themes emerge.

Fill-in-the blank and short answer

About half of the colleges on the Common App have these types of supplements. Answer from the heart. Do not guess at what they want to hear. Be yourself. My favorites for this application cycle include:

■ Name a dish you would make for the admissions team. (Chapman)

■ What is the greatest



invention of all time? (USC)

■ If you could choose anyone famous dead or alive to be your roommate, who would it be and why? (St. Mary's)

Essay themes

Essentially, there are three main topics that tend to show up for the essay supplements.

Most prevalent is a variation on the "Why us?" theme. No surprises here. Usually in about 100 to 300 words, the school wants to know why you want to attend there.

It probably goes without saying, but I will say it anyway because I come across this quite often: It is not sufficient to answer that you like the area the college is located in, or the weather is great or that the college's national reputation is of interest to you. It's too general, and likely, many colleges fit this description.

So how should this question be answered? Here are a few tips:

■ **Be specific.** If you have taken a tour, mention something specific and of relevance from the tour: internship opportunities; a school tradition you learned about; the newly renovated labs; seminar classes.

■ **Do research.** Find the programs and departments you would want to be a part of at their college. Try to find something unique, such as an unusual class or a capstone project, or a center that does research that interests you.

■ **Show your enthusiasm.**

Choose a specific club you would want to join, or offer to start one if they do not have it. Show how you will make an impact on campus.

■ **Read examples.** Look for sample answers to the question to help you brainstorm. There are websites where students post their answers. Check College Confidential — <http://talk.collegeconfidential.com/college-essays> — as a start.

Another common theme is "What do you want to study and why?" This requires a well-researched response. Drill down into your intended major and the course requirements to graduate. What inspires you? What have you done that supports this claim?

Some version of "What about our values appeals to you and why?" is also a popular supplement. Santa Clara, Pitzer and the University of Colorado at Boulder all have supplements that touch on this theme. I recommend looking at their mission statements and strategic visions to learn what they emphasize.

Once you have a handle on this, do some brainstorming about why it appeals to you, and try to think of concrete evidence to support your claim. If it is "cultivate knowledge," then provide examples of when you took it upon yourself to cultivate knowledge. Travel? Taking a class at a community college? Job shadowing?

And then there's this

Any column on supplements would be remiss if it didn't mention the supplement from the University of Chicago where they ask newly admitted and current students to submit ideas for supplements and then select the winners. Here's a whopper from this year:

"Orange is the new black,

Supplement questions range from fill-in-the blank to short-answer to lengthy essays. Some schools have none while others have several, and still others ask for a résumé or a writing sample.

fifty's the new thirty, comedy is the new rock 'n' roll, _____ is the new _____. What's in, what's out, and why is it being replaced?"

My past favorites include "What is the difference between Plato and Play-Doh?" and "What is so odd about odd numbers?" Clearly, the University of Chicago wants students to show their analytical chops.

A few parting words of advice: Be careful if you "recycle" essays to make sure that a college won't be able to tell that you copied and pasted from another school's supplement. Additionally, be sure to diversify the information. Do not repeat information that is already in the main essay.

And, most importantly, set aside sufficient time to answer these supplements thoroughly. Colleges require them for a reason. They care about the answers! So please spend time to get these right.

— Jennifer Borenstein is an independent college adviser in Davis and owner of *The Right College For You*. Her column is published on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Reach her at jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org, or visit www.therightcollegeforyou.org.