



Invention Convention Alumni Spotlight Starring: Danny Staudt

Danny Staudt participated in the Central Ohio Invention Convention not only one year but every from 1999-2002, while in the 4th-7th grades. He was featured in the Columbus Dispatch's Sunday Paper in 2001 for his "Flag Folding Machine" and he earned a "Superior" rating in 2002 for the "Hands Free Kite."



He graduated in 2012 with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in mechanical engineering from Cedarville University. He is currently a mechanical engineering consultant with Kramer Engineers, where he designs building infrastructure such as heating/cooling systems, plumbing, and electrical distribution systems for commercial and institutional projects.



He is also an entrepreneur and started his own business, Sci-Why Designs, located at The Columbus Idea Foundry, where he provides full service design, prototyping and general product development for his clients. Danny says he basically invents and solves problems for other people in his spare time. Danny is an outstanding example of the impact of STEAM programs for young innovative minds and the desire to continue problem solving throughout life. Thank you Danny for sharing your story with Invention Convention!

Danny's design & prototyping services are available at www.sciwhydesigns.com

Check out Dr. Claire's Interview with Danny

Dr. Claire: What did you invent and what problem did it solve?

Danny: 4th – The Skating Tutor, a cane on friction wheels used for balance.

5th – The Christmas Tree Tester, to make sure when buying a tree the branches will hold your heaviest of ornaments.



6th – The One Man Flag Folding Machine, a mount on a flagpole that allows one person to fold the American flag in the proper fashion.

7th – The Hands Free Kite, a portable stake system allowing for untended flying and automatic tensioning during weak gusts of wind.

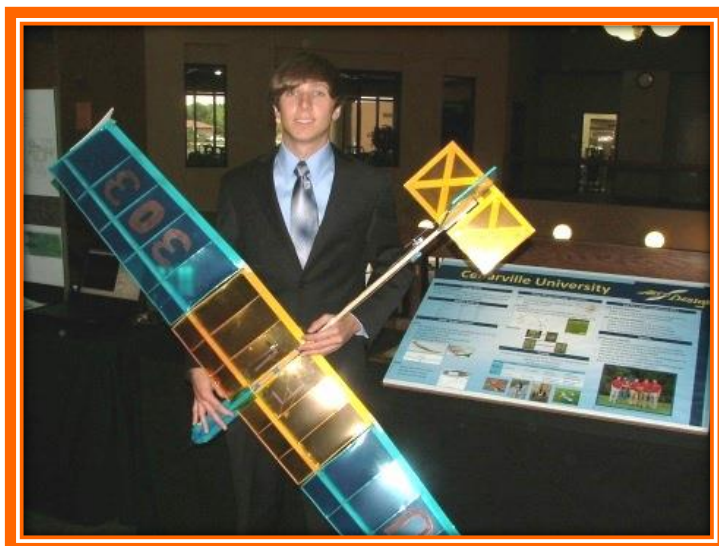
Dr. Claire: How did being part of the program impact your life?

Danny: As a child all my idols were inventors from the past and I would dream about the days of the Industrial Revolution. To discover that stories of similar par still were being made, some even by kids younger than me inspired me to strive toward similar goals. Akin to the scientific method we learned in school, the invention process opened a whole new world of perspective. This led me to pursue an education and career as an engineer.



Dr. Claire: Could you please share some highlights in your life since being part of Invention Convention? Accomplishments, awards, recognition, opportunities you were encouraged to try as a result of being part of Invention Convention.

Danny: In college, I got involved in an engineering academic club, aero design, where I designed experimental unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and flew them in international competition. The object was to design a plane that could be carried in a specific sized box and carry a payload around a course and land in one piece. Sometimes thinking outside of a box requires thinking inside a box, the box the plane had to fit into. The plane had to break down into pieces and be easily put back together. The flying part sounds easy enough until you start adding weight after weight since the scoring was based on max lift. I was happy to place 2nd in 2010 in the micro class at the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) West Competition.



Dr. Claire: What degrees or licenses are you currently working on earning?

Danny: I am currently working on getting my professional engineering license, which requires 4 years of experience working under another professional engineer.

Dr. Claire: Are you still problem solving or inventing?

Danny: As an engineer it is my job to solve problems and I enjoy tackling a new problem almost every day. I enjoy inventing which is why I started my prototyping company, Sci-Why Designs. Every day I use the things I learned at the Invention Convention to solve problems. I live by this quote by Alexander Graham Bell, "Wherever you may find the inventor, you may give him wealth or you may take from him all that he has; and he will go on inventing."



Dr. Claire: Do you have any specific plans for the future you would like to share?

Danny: I look forward to continuing my independent prototyping business for clients as well as producing a few of my own products. I plan to patent a few of my own creations as well and I have many mingling around. I am also a strong believer in the open source movement and I plan to contribute to problems that need solved around the world that everyone will have access to.

Dr. Claire: Can you share how you felt on convention day and after being part of the convention?

Danny: Judging day at the Invention Convention makes you super nervous, but they are days you will never forget. The nerves are soon forgot when you have so many eager people ready to listen about what you have invented. There are also tons of other crazy inventions to see that other kids have thought up. I also suggest taking advantage of all the guest speakers, presentations, and the sponsors that made it happen.

Dr. Claire: What words of advice/encouragement do you have for the young inventors today?

Danny: Never give up on your dreams. All inventors have to start somewhere and continuously have to solve problems. Even inventions that you may think are failures are helping you to find your way to the right solution. This is true for life in general as well.