

A beautiful day for science

by Amanda Carbajal, San Francisco State University

November 3, 2012 was a rare, beautiful fall Saturday in San Francisco and AT&T Park was buzzing with excitement and enthusiasm where people of all ages and background gathered to attend Bay Area Science Festival Discovery Days (BASF).

BASF Discovery Days featured a variety of representatives including those from scientific institutions, northern California schools and science clubs, such as the UAN groups from San Francisco State University (SFSU) and San Jose State University (SJSU). These groups provided the guests with an array of fun, colorful and



interactive booths on a broad spectrum of scientific topics. There were booths on astronomy, technology, gravity, engineering, life sciences and biology. Food, souvenir carts, mini shows and games also spread throughout the stadium. Last year, over 21,000 people attended this event and this year visitors came from the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland!



The SFSU-UAN, led by Dr. Teaster Baird, Jr. joined the SJSU-UAN and presented a booth that described the basics of DNA base-pairing using redvines (phosphodiester backbone)

and colored marshmallows (purines and pyrimidines).



Our booth had heavy traffic all day from children, ranging in age from preschool to high school. Parents and relatives listened and watched their children build double helices, while we explained how DNA encodes information. Many parents approached to ask questions and the kids posed with their DNA "models". A local middle school teacher even asked the SFSU UAN to pay a visit to their school to present this very same presentation.

Thanks to the SJSU UAN chapter's support and participation, our booth was a great success and we all had a great time sharing our knowledge and teaching kids a little about biology. Everyone is already looking forward to doing this again next year.

