On January 4, 2010, the PH STAIRSTEP students Nick Lanning and Robert Holman gave a presentation to the 5th and 6th grade science club at Pietzsch-MacArthur Elementary School located in Beaumont just blocks from Lamar University. There were 16 students attending to the event together with their mentors Sharon Rigsby from BISD and Melissa Weiblinger, a 5th grade teacher.

This type of outreach event was a brand new experience for me and to my surprise was quite fun. These kids were all very eager to learn and it was very encouraging to see them having fun with physics. They were enthusiastic about our optics demonstration and their teacher said our subject matter was right on target for what they needed to be introduced to for later classroom instruction. Hopefully we made a lasting impression with the students and I look forward to returning and to visiting new schools. –Nick Lanning

This was my first experience giving a presentation to children of such a young age. At first, I was worried about being able to present the information in a way they could understand. I didn’t know if we had enough material to last the entire time we were allotted. After getting over initial nervousness and actually interacting with the children, things began to feel more natural. I saw their amazement and enthusiasm. I was reminded of myself at their age watching what I thought was magic. I may not be as good as my childhood hero, but I hope to have lit the same flame in them that “Mr. Wizard” put in me.

–Robert Holman