

4-12-2018

Invention or Demolition? It's a Fine Line in Engineering Challenge

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/news_releases

 Part of the [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Weinstein, Mark D., "Invention or Demolition? It's a Fine Line in Engineering Challenge" (2018). *News Releases*. 673.
http://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/news_releases/673

This News Release is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Cedarville, a service of the Centennial Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Cedarville. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@cedarville.edu.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 12, 2018

CONTACT: Mark D. Weinstein
Executive Director of Public Relations
[937-766-8800](tel:937-766-8800) (o)
[937-532-6885](tel:937-532-6885) (m)
Mweinstein@cedarville.edu
@cedarvillenews

Invention or Demolition? It's a Fine Line in Engineering Challenge

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – A softball dropped from two stories and crashed into almost 200 popsicle sticks? Sounds like demolition, rather than competition. But two Cedarville professors have figured out a way to push student learning through this constructive, and potentially destructive, exercise in physics.

Dr. Cherish Lesko, adjunct professor of engineering, and Dr. Thomas Thompson, professor of mechanical engineering, are running this annual event, the crowning activity of their dynamics course. This year, it will be held Friday, April 13, in Cedarville's engineering and science building atrium at 3 p.m. Students are tasked with this unique challenge: create a ball catcher made of 165 popsicle sticks, 1.25 ounces of Elmer's Glue-All and four rubber bands. Their task is to catch a double-weighted softball dropped from 15 feet. The lightest weight structure that catches the ball wins the prize.

This year, 25 teams of students are competing in the fun and challenging event, which comprises 10 percent of the students' grades in this course. The winning team will be awarded a prize and certificate for creativity and engineering design.

"These students design effective ball catchers using the least material possible," said Thompson. "However, there are always unexpected things that happen in design and sometimes people with good ideas have a design that fails. This competition creates a positive and encouraging environment that emphasizes the learning experience and cooperation of the team."

"To stop the ball, strain energy (the energy that a material absorbs when it is deformed), friction, stretching rubber bands, and even splashing wet glue have been tried — however, due to rule changes, some things have only been tried once," continued Thompson. "In the end, prizes are awarded, and recognition is even given to the 'Most Spectacular Failure!' Overall, the emphasis is on this as a positive, team-building learning experience."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,963 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.

Subhead: Engineering students tackle challenging and fun Dynamics Competition with popsicle sticks, glue-all and rubber bands April 13.