An Update: From Dayton Youth Forum to ‘Where Are They Now?’

Two years ago we introduced a new segment to the 2012 Dayton Youth Forum called “Where Are They Now?” Many of our young presenters ranging in age from 6 years old to 18 years old stay in touch during the years following their appearances at Dayton.

I have been so impressed with the choices many of them have made that we decided to highlight some of them with a power point presentation to motivate and inspire the youngsters in the audience. Many of our former speakers have gone on to technical colleges like MIT, and others have pursued technical careers, hobbies, and so on.

Nick Lance, KC5SWM, and Andrew Koenig, KE5GDB

Nick Lance, KC5SWM, is the son of good friend Nick Lance Jr. He was licensed at age 7, and in 2000, when Nick was 11 years old, he was a presenter at the Dayton Youth Forum, Photo A. His topic was “The Mirror of the Atmosphere.”

He and his friend in fifth grade produced a short audio program in their science class for the radio program called “Earth and Sky” <http://www.earthsky.org>. Nicky’s project won second place nationally.

Obviously, all grown up now, Nick recently visited me with his mom and dad. I got to see great slides of his outstanding performances as an Elite Ultimate Player. (WATCH and LISTEN: To ESPN coverage of KC5SWM in the USA Ultimate (Frisbee®)


Nick graduated from Georgia Tech in Atlanta, Georgia where he earned a BS in Electrical Engineering in May 2012. Today, Nick works at AMD (Advanced Micro Devices) at Ft. Collins, Colorado where he has been since May 2012.

Andrew Koenig, KE5GDB, was 16 years old when he spoke about some of his remarkable

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accomplishments at the Dayton Youth Forum. His topic was “Youth and Amateur Radio Satellites,” Photo C. Today he is at the University of Texas at Dallas studying Telecommunications Engineering. He is active on campus with the K5UTD Amateur Radio Club, Photo D, and spends quite a bit of time in the shack.

"Being an amateur radio operator opened the door to work with a research physicist on campus to study upper atmospheric anomalies," Andrew said. He tells me that being in ham radio was the main influential factor in pursuing what he is doing now.

Some of Andrew’s “sub-interests” in ham radio, such as IRLP, have given him a good background on Linux-based systems, repeater design, and networking.

His presentation on satellite communications at Dayton was all part of his interest that was a key factor in his research work today. “My interest in amateur satellites and the various components of the hobby have helped me become much more well-rounded in areas that you wouldn’t typically associate with amateur radio,” Andrew said.

Rebecca Rich, KBØVVT

Last October I had the privilege of a reunion with Rebecca Rich, KBØVVT, who was on my Youth Forum at Pacificon in Silicon Valley, California, Photo E. She was 11 years old when she impressed the audience at the Dayton Youth Forum. Now at the age of 23, this talented young lady is the president of W6YX the Stanford amateur radio club.

Padraig Lysandrou, KC9UUS

In March 2014 I recommended Padraig Lysandrou, KC9UUS, for the IWCE (International Wireless Communications Exhibit) Young Person’s Award at the Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. At age 16 Padraig was a presenter at my Dayton Youth Forum. He spoke about the DXpedition he led to the divided island of Cyprus with his family at age 15.

Padraig contacted authorities and fully researched the laws regarding amateur radio use in the Greek part of the island. His story can be found in the May 2013 edition of QST magazine, Photo F. It was wonderful meeting with Padraig and his mother, Carolyn, KC9URR, and hearing about the college acceptances he’s in the process of getting.

Two more former Youth Forum presenters who have remained in touch with me are:

Devlin Murray, KC2PIX, and Chris Blackwood, KD2CXC

Devlin Murray, KC2PIX, and Chris Blackwood, KD2CXC, who were presenters at the Youth Forum last year, Photo G, wowed the audience with their demonstration on “Combining Robotics, Amateur Radio and Public Service.”

In November 2013 I invited them to give their presentation at the RCA (Radio Club of America) Technical Symposium at Orlando, Florida. They literally stopped the show. Folks in the audience rushed to the front of the room to view up close, what the robotic device looked like.