

NASA scientist encourages students to study science

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NASA scientist Dr. Firouz Naderi answers questions from students Tuesday during a presentation on space.

homeless children attending public schools in Volusia. There are more than 2,000 homeless students in Volusia schools and the program helps more than 600 children at 14 schools, said Forough Hosseini, founder of the nonprofit.

Besides providing meals to the children, the nonprofit also helps nourish them academically. Naderi was in Daytona Beach for a presentation at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, so Hosseini took the opportunity to have him speak to elementary, middle and high school children so they get interested in different fields of study, she said.

Speaking of billions of stars and suns and galaxies, Naderi grabbed students' interest at the Performing Arts Auditorium at Mainland with videos, including one about the landing of the rover Curiosity on Mars, a project he worked on.

About 200 students from different schools attended, Hosseini said.

"Basically I tried to give them a sense of what the universe is made of and why it is important that they study science," Naderi said.

Battle, who wants to be a technical engineer, said she asked if the Earth is dying because she heard the planet doesn't have a lot of water left.

"I think the good doctor did a great job explaining in layman's terms everything the kids didn't know about the universe," said Don Lucas, seventh grade teacher at Campbell Middle School. "The students will be more motivated to learn more about science and that's all you can ask for."

— *Intern Jasmine Lewis contributed to this report.*