

# ebm-papst gets students in Mulfingen excited about technology with MINTec

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### Mulfingen

"I really had a lot of fun," said Hanna Dewald. "The only bad thing is that my car drives a little crooked." But it drove farther than all of the other cars except one. And this nine-year-old, the only girl among the twelve students participating from the Mulfingen "Grund- und Hauptschule" primary schools, won second place with the car. The awards ceremony was the high point of the latest MINTec workshop held by ebm-papst at the Mulfingen school.

MINTec stands for mathematics, computer science, natural sciences and technology. To get children and teenagers excited about these subjects, the "Innovationsregion Kocher & Jagst," a local business association, started the MINTec education initiative in July of 2007. MINTec is implemented in the MINTec workshops and has 13 companies, 17 schools and six kindergartens in the region participating. Additionally, the trainees of the companies get a key role. At the MINTec workshop in the Mulfingen school, Jonathan Grochla, Tobias Ehrler, Marcus Zöllinger, Eduard Schneider and Artjom Hinkel slipped into the role of learning partner. They are completing training at ebm-papst to be an Electronics Engineer for Devices and Systems.

Even before the project began, the third-grade students were so interested that 24 students, rather than the anticipated eight, registered; the children were then divided into two groups. And this, even though they had to give up two afternoons when school was not in session. Word of mouth was the key here. Several students had already participated in the MINTec workshop last year and reported with enthusiasm about how they had built a periscope under the direction of the ebm-papst trainees. This time the young experimenters had the task of building a drivable car using four wheels, two axles and cardboard. And once again, the children were fascinated.

"It was a great experience for my students," concluded the class teacher, Claudia Mark. "They knew that someone was there who really knows something about technology." The car of ten-year-old Philipp Burkert from Jagstberg went the farthest. Though he had never participated in such a project before, he won the competition. "It feels really great," he said, beaming with joy. Classmate Tien Nguyen is also content with his work: "To build something was totally new for me, but I learned very quickly, and I really had a lot of fun."

Children like this who – sparked by MINTec – have an aptitude for technical questions are very dear to the heart of Bernd Ludwig. For the Training Manager from ebm-papst Mulfingen, it is a special challenge every year to select the young

staff members. Ludwig would like to see even more qualified applicants, above all in the industrial/technical area. "For us to keep our technical advantage, ebmpapst, just like the other technological leaders in the region, needs outstanding specialists, technicians and engineers." For this reason, ebmpapst gets involved not only with MINTec, but also with other projects, some of which are "Youth research", the "Inventors' Week", the Student Engineer Academy and "Girls' Day".

But ebmpapst is aware that MINTec can be only a beginning, even if it is a particularly important one. "Technical understanding should be fostered not only by one project, but continuously," explains trainer Martin Schmitt, "at school, and even as early as nursery school."

**Author:** Reinhold Brütting

**Caption:**

The young Mulfingen MINTec experimenters used four wheels, two axles and cardboard to build a drivable car.

**About ebmpapst**

The ebmpapst Group is the world's leading manufacturer of fans and motors and is a pioneer and pacesetter for ultra-efficient EC technology.

In the last fiscal year 09/10, the company generated turnover of 986 million EUR. ebmpapst employs over 10,000 people at 17 production facilities (including Germany, China, USA) and 57 sales offices worldwide. Products of the global market leader are represented in many industries, including ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration technology, household appliances, heating engineering, in IT/telecommunications applications, as well as those in automotive and commercial vehicle engineering.