



June 14, 2009

Public gets chance to view cyclotron lab at MSU

Brittany Smith
brittanysmith@lsj.com

EAST LANSING - The public got a chance to explore the world of atoms, isotopes and nuclei Saturday afternoon during the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory open house at Michigan State University.

"We're inviting the public to see what our lab is about and share our enthusiasm about nuclear science with them," said Geoff Koch, communications manager at NSCL.

The event drew more than 800 people, organizers said.

People took a self-guided tour where they saw the laboratory's control rooms, accelerators and even a music video, "F to the Rib Rap," where MSU students expressed their love of rare isotopes over a hip-hop beat.

"I think this is pretty cool," said Mollie Tubbs, 30, of Lansing, who earned her master's degree in zoo aquarium management from MSU.

"I like the rap a lot and seeing all the machines and accelerators."

Attendees also got a chance to see the area where NSCL's \$550 million project, the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB), will be built.

This was NSCL's first open house in three years, but with a new addition to the laboratory in the works and more publicity, it was time for another one, said Koch.

FRIB is to be funded by the U.S. Department of Energy and Science.

It will be part of the nation's largest campus-based nuclear science laboratory and one of the most powerful such facilities in the world.

Zach Constan, NSCL's outreach coordinator, said the project will help boost the state's economy.

"We will attract top government funds for science research, and with that comes jobs," he said.

"We're excited."