

PUSD middle school robotics program students  
March 8, 2011  
Tour of TO

On March 8th, I hosted two groups of 6 and 8th graders (11-13 year-old students) for a presentation of the Tectonics Observatory. I gathered the students in a large classroom and talked about my research for about 20 minutes twice.

I showed them a movie of earthquake cycles. I made the presentation interactive by asking the kids lots of questions and letting their teacher stimulate the conversation based on what they discussed in class.

We had a map of California in the room and I used it to ask questions such as: are we sitting on the American or the Pacific Plate? Where is the San Andreas Fault? What is seismicity, or an epicenter? Experiencing an earthquake, how can you tell how strong and how far is it?

Also I let the kids know anecdotes about myself: how I came to do science, what was my background and so forth.

Later I took the students to the hallway outside 215 N Mudd and discussed the large map of bathymetry/seismicity. I like this map because it shows earthquake beach balls which can tell the direction of plate motion. There, we also discuss mid-ocean ridges, spreading rates and plate tectonics. After that, Laurie took the kids to see an old seismograph. Overall, it's a lot of fun.