

GULF COAST MAKERCON

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Gulf Coast MakerCon 2015 is Making it BIG on April 18th at Florida Fairgrounds

Tampa - Gulf Coast MakerCon 2015 will feature more than 75 Maker groups representing a wide diversity of interests, skills, hobbies, trades and professions ranging from textile and other heritage crafters, to amateur radio, inventors and 3D printing enthusiasts. The event is April 18th, from 9am to 6pm, at the Florida Center at the Florida State Fairgrounds, at 4800 US-301 in Tampa, accessed through MLK Blvd.

Sponsored by USF Connect, the Florida High Tech Corridor, the National Academy Inventors, and TECO Energy, with a grant from Hillsborough County Economic Development Innovation Initiative (EDI2), the event brings together the creative, entrepreneurial and inventive energy of over 300 technologists, artists, crafters, mechanical and electrical wizards, costumers and prop makers, roboticists, musical artists, inventors, gamers, coders, and more.

Over a dozen area makerspaces from across four counties will be showcasing their programs, tools and services, along with member creations. A half dozen schools will be anchoring the Young Makers area, with Maker Education exhibits and hands-on fun and learning.

The Tampa Bay Inventors Council Inventors Showcase will feature over a dozen local inventors, many with their products for sale. Gamers on the Edge heads up the ComicCon & Gaming area and the St. Petersburg College Orthotics and Prosthetics department is partnering with the nonprofit charity, e-Nable, to demonstrate 3D prosthetics printing. Special events at Gulf Coast MakerCon include:

- Deconstruction Zone, hosted by Scrap on Spot e-waste recycling, for an inside look at electronics
- Electrathon race, by Electrathon of Tampa Bay, with over a dozen electric car racing teams from around the state
- Southeast Combot Championship competition, hosted by the University of South Florida Robotics Interest Group (RIG) featuring 25 fighting robots
- Workshops on starting a makerspace, raising investment capital for inventors, injection molding process, rapid prototyping, patent process, renewable energy, and more.

Plus *FIRST* robotics scrimmages, project demos, instrument petting zoo, live chemistry show, tabletop, arcade and video gaming, ComicCon, live entertainment and plenty to see, do, try and learn about in celebration of the DIY Inventive Spirit. Advanced tickets can be purchased online at \$2 off gate costs. Admission the day of the event is \$12/person, ages 13 and up. \$10 for children ages 6-12. Children 5 and under are free. Fairgrounds parking is \$6/vehicle.

Gulf Coast MakerCon is produced by the Eureka Factory in partnership with Mity Mo Creative, the Innovation Lab at Seminole Community Library at St. Petersburg College, the Tampa Bay Inventors Council, Scrap on Spot, F5 Live: Refreshing Technologies, and Real Life, Inc. . Gulf Coast MakerCon 2015 is a USA Science & Engineering Festival Satellite Event, and a National Robotics Week event.

About Gulf Coast MakerCon

Gulf Coast MakerCon is a community festival celebrating the DIY (Do It Yourself) Inventive Spirit, held each spring, in Tampa Bay, Florida. The event focuses on technical, creative and professional exhibits, workshops and sessions covering everything from patent development and the inventive process, to 3D printing, programming, mechanical and electrical design, green tech and open source technologies, and is produced by Eureka Factory, in collaboration with creative community partners.

About Eureka Factory

Eureka! Factory specializes in the development of creative programs, events and spaces for nonprofit and community organizations and institutions. The Eureka Factory believes in the power of Community Driven Innovation to change lives and deepen culture. The Eureka Factory also produces ROBOTICON Tampa Bay, a *FIRST* K-12 Robotics Showcase, each fall. Visit EurekaFactory.net to learn more.