When Aaron Becker, assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering at the Cullen College, took seven engineering students to the UH Charter elementary school to play with robots, he wasn’t just opening young minds — he was upholding the charter school’s vision to help students fulfill their potential through wonder and discovery.

His college students came into the fourth grade class carrying robotic arms they had built in Becker’s lab and little building blocks to show the youngsters how the robotic arm can pick up pieces. Each UH student had 3-4 youngsters in their small group, so each got plenty of chances to control the robotic arm.

“I believe the best way for students to learn is for them to teach,” said Becker, who regularly takes his engineering students to the UH Charter School to show elementary students that science and engineering can be great fun.

His methods work, according to fourth grade teacher Gail Paul. “I see high-fives going around the room, so I know it’s working,” said Paul. “It’s totally beneficial and hands-on experience, which is highly engaging and motivates them to want to learn to do more.”
Proof positive of what Paul says: Fourth grader Paula screams out “Can you please come back?!?” as the Becker group is leaving.

See photos of the visit here.

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