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Feedback from Over 10 Years of Youth Outreach with the Optics Suitcase¹

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Since 1999, more than 225 Optics Suitcases have been assembled and shipped to individuals, OSA and SPIE student chapters, educators at private/public primary/middle/high schools/colleges/universities, companies and national laboratories throughout the USA (29 states + PR) and the world (26 countries - Canada to Cameroon, Ireland to India, Mexico to Malawi, Turkey to Thailand). The Suitcase contains a 40 minute lesson exploring color in white light with three theme packet experiments: Rainbow Peephole-diffraction, Magic Stripes-polarization, and Magic Patch-selective reflection. The packets are given to children after the lesson to take home and share. The goal is to interest youth in technology careers. One of the theme packets is offered upon request in an expanded form as a Liquid Crystal Mood Patch Lesson. Suitcases are sent after receipt of a 1/2 page application submitted on-line to the OSA Foundation. Here we describe the program and review feedback with letters and photos provided by presenters and participants.

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