

# Girls show off knowledge, skills gained at STEM camp

Weeklong event themed Pixels, Paws, & Propulsion

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MONTANDON — More than 40 parents and caregivers attended the final day of a female STEM camp at CSIU in Montandon, where their children, ages 8-12, showcased programs they experienced throughout the weeklong camp.

“Ever since we got our PA-Smart grant several years back, each grant has supported at least one summer camp,” said organizer Tanya Dyna, CSIU Instructional Technology & STEM specialist. “This year, the grant supported two camps.”

Girls STEM Camp 2026 was themed Pixels, Paws, & Propulsion, and during the week, middle school students were brought together for a week of hands-on STEM learning, field experiences and career exploration.

The STEM camp is designed to inspire the next generation of innovators by providing

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Photos by Robert Inglis/The Daily Item

**STEAM Innovations hosted a group of girls from a STEM Camp hosted by the CSIU on Thursday in Sunbury.**



**Stella Shawver, 11, Middleburg, pours resin into a cup at STEAM Innovations in Sunbury on Thursday while participating in a Girls STEM Camp through the CSIU.**



**Hayley Koklinski, 13, Winfield, does a wood burning drawing at STEAM Innovations in Sunbury while participating in a girls STEM Camp through the CSIU on Thursday.**

## Local

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meaningful exposure to STEM careers, real-world applications, and mentorship opportunities, Dyna said.

Through interactive experiences and field trips, participants gain confidence, build technical skills, and discover pathways in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The girls engaged in activities related to technology, and each day was a different theme: animal-assisted therapy, cybersecurity, engineering, innovation, and creative problem-solving. "The students got to see what are some of the skills and talents in future careers that you can get in STEM. So they can actually start to see themselves in a STEM field," Dyna said.

"It's about exposure, awareness, and inspiration," she said. The camp is open to 25 girls every year. "And there has always been a wait list."

**"I'm always amazed by what they do. They're girls, middle school girls, and maturing. But they are interested in seeing what is out there. The hope is that they get an interest in something they didn't know they had an interest in. And drive more women into STEM fields."**

**— Tanya Dyna, CSIU Instructional Technology & STEM specialist**

The campers are broken up into groups comprised of five or six girls. And on Friday, each group was responsible for one presentation to parents and other visitors.

When parents arrived at 1:30 p.m., they moved from one station to another, where campers told them what they learned, and had a hands-on activity to showcase.

"I'm always amazed by what they do," Dyna laughed. "They're girls, middle school girls, and maturing. But they are interested in seeing what is out there. The hope is that they get an interest

in something they didn't know they had an interest in. And drive more women into STEM fields."

Kelly Graboski's daughter, Violetta, 12, is interested in becoming a marine biologist. Violetta, of Danville, was explaining to visiting parents how learning about e-sports can be a pathway to team building and game-related fields.

Kristen Moser's daughter, Emma, 12, at a "MakeHer Space" station, is very much interested in the sciences. "This is our second year in the program," Moser said. "It's great. I wish it were bigger."



Robert Inglis/The Daily Item

**Anna Zook, 13, Lewisburg, pours resin into a mold at STEM Innovations in Sunbury on Thursday while participating in a Girls STEM Camp through the CSIU.**