

Girl Powered connects students with STEM activities

Posted by [TBN\(Staff\)](#) On 01/09/2020

It wasn't all robotics at Girl Powered. Ariana Gonzalez, left, a C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School fourth grader, J.C. Parks Elementary School fifth grader Summer Pagala, and Isabella McRae, a fifth grader at William A. Diggs Elementary School, test their engineering skills by building a structure using marshmallows and pasta.

Mary Anne Onianwah has always been interested in how people connect, it could be why she enrolled in North Point High School's Cisco Networking Academy Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.

"My parents come from a third world country and I see how technology connects people around the world," said Onianwah, a senior who would like to study information science or human-computer interaction in college.

Ariana Gonzalez, left, and Brooklyn Cannon, C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School fourth graders, test out a robot on a VEX Robotics course during the Girl Powered Robotics and Programming Workshop.

At one time she wanted to major in medical information technology, but over the years, Onianwah has found herself drawn to the "why." Why do people use technology the way they do? Continued questioning is a component of STEM — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — education and careers. Girl Powered, a robotics and programming workshop designed to engage young girls in STEM activities was held Jan. 4 at North Point with Onianwah and other high school students leading stations and tasks for girls in elementary school.

"There's not a lot of us in those fields — girls in STEM," Onianwah said. "Even now, you ask girls 'What does a scientist look like?' They'll say, 'A man.' But 10, 20 years from now, they are the face of STEM."

D'Asia McGee-Ruffin, a J.C. Parks Elementary School third grader, made a lava lamp out of water, oil, Kool-Aid and Alka Seltzer, during a robotics and programming workshop, Girl Powered.

High school students showed the younger girls how to make their own lava lamps, challenged them to build a steady structure using only spaghetti noodles and marshmallows, and let them operate a robot through an obstacle course.

Brooklyn Cannon, a fourth-grade student at C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School, said she is interested in STEM and that it might lead to a career. "I could get a future job where I can help people," she said.

Like Cannon, Isabella McRae, a William A. Diggs Elementary School fifth grader, is looking beyond the here and now. "I like coding, robotics," she said. "I want to see how we can change the future."

Copyright © 2020 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.