

Kennebec Journal

February 22, 2005

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Tech Is for Girls

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FAIRFIELD -- Girls can excel in male-dominated careers related to science, math and technology.

That will be the focus of the Girls Unlimited! Conference, to be held March 12 at Kennebec Valley Community College.

Sponsored by two nonprofit organizations-- the Waterville-based Hardy Girls Healthy Women, and Rockland-based Zoey's Room -- the conference is entitled "TechKNOW!"

It is designed to provide a fun opportunity and help broaden girls' perspectives of their own capabilities by helping them explore their natural talents and interests in a safe, thought-provoking environment, according to organizers.

"I think it'll be fascinating," said Karen Heck, a founder of Hardy Girls. "We want girls to become part of the technical revolution, and explore it in a fun and easy way."

The conference is for girls in grades 5-8.

They will be offered workshops focusing on careers in engineering, science, medicine, Web design, video art, animation and GIS cartography. Hands-on science experiments, creating an online Weblog -- or "blog" -- and learning how to project video images onto oneself to create living art are just some of the offerings.

Two morning sessions are designed to help increase their understanding of computers, the media and girls' involvement with both: "Technology Made Easy," and "Mentoring Girls in Technology," according to Heck.

Lyn Mikel Brown, another Hardy Girls founder and author of three books on girls' healthy development, will hold a workshop for women, including mothers.

Early registration is encouraged for the one-day conference, and students and adults may have a choice as to what workshops they attend. Pre-registration ends March 7.

Scholarships are available. Those wanting more information are asked to call Hardy Girls at 861-8131 or go to <http://www.hardygirlshealthywomen.org>

Hardy Girls is a volunteer-based organization dedicated to helping empower, protect and promote girls and women in central Maine.

Zoey's Room is an organization seeking to provide interactive programs for youth through character-based activities that integrate art, technology and education.

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