LEGO LEAGUE ‘Body Forward’ Robotics Competition!

Fall is winding down and it will be a great time of year at Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell. In a few short weeks, we will send a team of bright, young girls to the 2010 First Lego League tournament in New Hampshire. First Lego League is a robotics program designed to inspire kids age 9-14 to get excited about science and technology while teaching them valuable communication and critical thinking skills. This year marks the fourth tournament season for our girls in Lowell and the team we are sending is excited to represent Girls Inc. and to show off their hard work amidst a sea of other teams. Each First Lego League season encompasses a different theme which the girls must research and present both to the community and at the competition.

The 2010 challenge is called Body Forward, an exploration of Biomedical Engineering. The girls must use innovative ways to recover from injuries, and the purpose is to inspire an interest in science and technology. The girls have spent time working with cancer, sleep deprivation, and vitamin deficiency. First Lego League, the program on their own robot. This robot must be programmed ahead of the competition and navigated a course of Lego models built by the girls. This aspect of Lego League has been both the most fun and the most challenging. Fun and hard work are the two most crucial values associated with First Lego League.

Parents and Girls Inc. staff can help guide the girls but offering any help solving the actual problem is forbidden. While this poses a great challenge, it has created strong teamwork among the girls who are able to create solutions.

As we get closer to our November 20th competition date, the girls are becoming increasingly excited and nervous to share their work. Sally Ride once said, “When you're getting ready to launch into space, you're sitting on a big explosion waiting to happen.” At Girls Inc. Lowell, we could not be more excited to see what our girls inspire!
**New Program Coordinator!  Katelyn Adams**

I am a recent graduate of Keene State College with a bachelor of science in Elementary Education and a bachelor of arts in Feminist Anthropology. In the fall of 2005, I began volunteering at Girls Incorporated where I was then offered the opportunity to work as a program specialist. After graduating in the spring of 2010, I came back this past summer because I missed being a part of the Girls Inc. family. I love working with the girls and feel very passionate about the organization’s mission and philosophy. I value Girls Inc. because of its focus on empowerment and giving girls as many opportunities as possible to discover their talents in order to leave their mark on society. Girls Inc. has become like a second home to me, and I feel extremely fortunate that Jen and Carol have given me this opportunity. They both have been very supportive mentors.

While studying Cultural Anthropology and Women’s Studies I became very involved in activism on campus, as well as within the town of Keene, New Hampshire. Feminism is a large part of who I am and the way that I live my life. I am enthusiastic about community involvement and look forward to building on our partnerships with UMass-Lowell, Middlesex Community College, and other schools in the area. My goals are to reach more girls in the Greater Lowell area and continue to bring strong programming to our youth. I am very interested in literacy and engaging the girls in learning about cultures around the world. I am excited about the possibilities for Girls Inc. and look forward to working closely with the girls and their families.

**What’s Happening at Girls Inc.?**

**United Way “Community Cares”**

On September 15, thanks to United Way Cares Day, IBM employees volunteered their time to re-organize and clean several of Girls Inc. activity rooms. The Girls Inc. staff, as well as our girls, are beyond grateful for the wonderful community days (such as this one) and the organizations and businesses who participate. Thank you, United Way and the hard working employees of IBM!

**River Day with Representative Niki Tsongas**

Girls Inc. girls and staff celebrated River Day with Rep. Niki Tsongas along the Concord River on Sunday, September 12. The event helped to raise awareness about the river, its ecosystems and the importance of conservation. Girls Inc. member Shailagh Brooks spoke at the event. She talked about the experiences the girls have had working with the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust and the Audubon Society doing clean-ups in Backyard Adventures class.

This fall, our middle school girls have the opportunity to join Build IT, a program in which “IT” is Information Technology! The current class is learning about careers in computer game design and they will be designing and programming their own computer game for others to play. Using Stagecast software, the girls have been learning how to create character icons, how to write rules for interaction and movement, and how to use variables and apply logic to achieve the results they want. Come January, look for a Tech Night during which the Build IT girls will unveil their original, multi-stage game for your enjoyment! Build IT will continue throughout the year, with a unit in the winter focusing on network and wireless technologies, and a springtime unit during which the girls will design and create an original website.
The teen girls at Girls Inc. have long yearned for a separate space that they can call their own, and the Girls Inc. Board of Directors and staff are gearing up to make this a reality. We have already engaged the Jericho Road Project in matching us up with architects who are redesigning third floor space that is currently unused, so that our teens can have their own “home away from home” with study/lounge areas and computer, kitchen and bath facilities.

Watch for further news on Operation Teen! and learn how you can help bring this project to fruition!

On Tuesday October 26th, Girls Inc. participated in our National Girls Inc. She Votes Campaign. Along with the members running for governor, there was a question on the ballot that asked, “Should schools be allowed to sell soda in vending machines?” Out of the 30 girls who voted, 21 said “No” to allowing schools to sell soda in vending machines. As for governor, Deval Patrick won by a landslide!
TO:

“Woman of the Year” Nominations for 2011

Do you know a woman who:

~ Demonstrates exceptional leadership and commitment; has a strong work ethic; integrity; compassion; and cares for the community and its people?

~ Works with dedication to enhance the quality of life and effects positive change in the Greater Lowell community?

It’s that time of year when we ask for your help in selecting the 2011 “Woman of the Year” for the 18th Annual Celebration of Today’s Woman! Please submit this nomination form and mail to us by January 28, 2011.

NAME of NOMINEE: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Phone Number: ____________________________
Reason for Nomination: ____________________________
______________________________________________
______________________________________________
Nominee’s Job, Title, Employer: ____________________________

Submitted by: ____________________________ Telephone or Email: ____________________________

SAVE THE DATE!!!
Girls Inc. Holiday Wreath Auction      Tuesday, November 30th    Vesper Country Club   6:00PM - 9:00PM