Girls explore technology and more at TXT

Teens Exploring Technical Education camp exposed girls to a wide range of career opportunities.

Lauren Clark might want to be a children’s doctor or a teacher or something else entirely. After spending last week learning about all the jobs out there, she’s just not sure what she wants to do.

It’s ok though. The fifth grader has plenty of time to figure it out.

Clark took park in the Dakota County Technical College Teens Experiencing Technical Education 2011 camp. The camp, which aimed to introduce girls to the technical fields, drew more than 170 to DCTC last week. From all accounts was “awesome.”

Over the course of the week the girls, who were in fifth through eighth grades, got a taste of everything from the transportation industry to computer science to nanoscience to nursing. At times the girls founds themselves operating a backhoe, welding, looking at a car engine, making an avatar or developing their own photographs.

Every girl had her own preference, but most said they learned a lot.

“Nanoscience is really cool,” said Jordan Schwarkopf, who will enter eighth grade this fall.

Schwarkopf hopes to be a geneticist someday. She also liked the big trucks.

Mariah and Makaylie Hager aren’t sure what they want to do as adults but said the DCTC camp helped open their eyes to all the opportunities out there. Makaylie also learned she liked yoga.

All three girls hope to attend the camp next year. Camp planner Linda Foster said she has received nothing but positive comments about the camp.

“It’s so fun at the end of the day to hear them talk to their parents about the things they did,” said Foster. “It has gone better than I hoped.”

Foster, the director of technology at DCTC, came up with the camp. A self proclaimed geek, she wanted to
give girls a hands on experience to technical occupations that many girls never get exposed to.

“This is a way to make them see other careers options that are out there,” said Foster.

Foster hopes to make the camp an annual event at DCTC. For more information visit www.dctc.edu/go/txt or contact Linda Foster at 651-423-8439 or via email Linda.Foster@dctc.edu.