

# MakerGirl helps local girls build imagination in 3D

June 21 2017 4:47 PM



EDWARDSVILLE – More than 20 local girls created designs and watched them come to life on 3D printers at Lewis and Clark Community College's St. Louis Confluence Fab Lab Monday, June 19.

The sessions, for girls ages 7-10, were sponsored by MakerGirl, a social, non-profit start-up founded at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. MakerGirl's mission is to inspire young girls to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math fields (STEAM) through 3D printing sessions.



“This is a good age to help girls become more aware of STEAM because they are curious,” said Sarah Freriks, 25, a recent U of I engineering graduate and MakerGirl truck team member. “It is important to take this workshop on the road to reach as many girls as we can. I am from a small town and had little to no exposure to STEAM studies. I didn’t know what engineering was. I hope being a mentor to the girls and telling them about my journey will empower them to explore more options.”

The participants used the Fab Lab’s computers to create three-dimensional objects, and watched excitedly as the lab’s printers brought them to fruition.

“This is really fun, and I can’t wait for mine to finish printing,” said 11-year-old Gwen Chapman, of Edwardsville, as she watched layers of orange plastic build her design on the 3D printer’s plate.

The free MakerGirl sessions are led by university leaders to foster creativity, spark enthusiasm and ignite passions for innovation and positive change making.

Freriks and Mary Hadley, 20, a junior studying chemistry at University of Illinois, are traveling the Midwest this summer, conducting the free 3D printing sessions for girls.

“It has been a great turnout today, and the girls are really interested in learning about technology and using their imaginations,” Hadley said. “With MakerGirl we want to change the perceptions about STEAM and get more girls interested. The goal is to drive change and promote equality, not only here in the USA, but globally as well.”

For more information on MakerGirl, visit [makergirl.us](http://makergirl.us).

The St. Louis Confluence Fab Lab is located on L&C’s N.O. Nelson Campus in Edwardsville, and is open for community memberships. Learn more at [www.lc.edu/fablab](http://www.lc.edu/fablab).