MSU Women in Computing Hosts Workshop for 40 Girls

March 26, 2012

More than 40 girls in 4th-8th grades from area schools spent a recent Saturday participating in a Technology Workshop sponsored by MSU Women in Computing.

Fifteen MSU student volunteers led sessions on creating web pages with HTML and CSS, as well as basic programming concepts using Scratch. The girls overwhelmingly rated the workshop as being fun and informative. This workshop, which has been offered twice a year for Girl Scouts for the last five years, was expanded spring semester to include others.

"There is a high demand for computer scientists everywhere in the United States," says Teresa Isela VanderSloot, coordinator of the program. "It is important for girls to consider the wide variety of job options in computing. If they have a passion for a particular industry or want to make a difference in some way, computer science is definitely a field they should consider."

"We need to reach girls in middle and high school, when they are forming an image of what they want to be and what they like and are good at, if we are going to increase the numbers choosing computer science," says Laura Dillon, professor of computer science and engineering. "And we need their talents and insights to remain competitive in a world increasingly dependent on information technology. The MSU WIC Technology Workshop gives young girls positive role models they can relate to. It piques their interest, empowers them to learn and play with computing, and builds confidence."
During the March 24 workshop, Satish Udpa (on right in the photo at left), dean of the College of Engineering, paid a visit to the classrooms and talked to the girls about careers in computer science and engineering.

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