



DAY OF THE GIRL

US movement - OCTOBER 11TH

There are not enough ways to express the gratitude we have for everyone who contributed to make the first annual [Central Illinois Day of the Girl Rally](#) possible this past Saturday. It was truly a collaborative event, which (I hope) encouraged and inspired you about the future generations of women and their role(s) in a global society.

We had about 75 participants that made this day possible, in addition to many organizations and people who lent support in spite of their in-ability to attend!

[Makerspace Urbana](#) provided valuable creative thinking experiences for attendees at their booth, sharing more about their many resources and the [Maker Movement](#).

[Elizabeth Wickes](#) of [PY-CU](#) – a subsidiary of Makerspace – taught attendees about the Python coding language, its accessibility, and the importance of learning coding for people in all vocational paths!

[Miss Possible](#)'s CEO [Supriya Hobbs](#) shared the inspirational story of why and how Miss Possible started – challenging us to challenge the status quo each day to make the world better for everyone. She and [Kelly Lin](#) worked with participants to creatively problem-solve problems they see in the world around them and depict their ideas visually through play-doh and drawings. Everything from too little recess time at school to our overflowing land-fills was addressed by GIRLS!

[The Institute for Genomic Biology](#)'s [Melissa McKillip](#) used hands-on materials to get girls thinking about what genes are, and what they do, making this high-level concept developmentally appropriate for girls of all ages.

[The Urbana Free Library Teen Space](#) booth (hosted by Amber Cox) provided information about their open labs for 3D printing, video and board game clubs and showcased a variety of teen literature highlighting strong female role models.

[The Association for Women in Mathematics](#) booth was also well received, as girls created geometric solids and learned about the programs being offered to teens through the University's branch of the organization with topics of *Geometry & Nature* and *Probability & Statistics* from [Michelle Delcourt](#).

[The Society of Women Engineers at U of I](#) hosted a station highlighting the variety of careers attainable by women in STEM and IT fields – encouraging them to think beyond the roles they see each day and discovering that there are many ways to be a girl!

Elsie Hedgpeth from the [Urbana Park District](#) and [Erin Morris](#) of the [Illinois Women's Hockey team](#) presented the #likeagirl station – where everyone was encouraged to show their strength! They also distributed shoelaces and fliers for the upcoming [Girls on the Run of Champaign County with Stephens Family YMCA 5K!](#)

[Dr. G's Brainworks](#) hosted a game station for girls to expand their thinking, problem solve and be creative – in addition to providing a \$20 gift certificate for one lucky door prize winner to be used towards a science kit from their store!

With free cookies on hand Melissa Guthrie from the [Girls Scouts of Central IL](#) shared more information about what it mean to be a girl scouts - trying new adventures, learning to lead and scaling new heights!

[Debbie Hensleigh of NeedLessgiveMore.com](#) and [Tabatha Helm](#) provided guidance for participants to “keep Day of the Girl going!” Younger girls were encouraged to brainstorm ways to empower the other girls their age with their words and actions, while older girls were challenged to learn more about [global issues facing girls](#) today and take action in an area that they felt passionate about.

[Illinois Mediation Services, Inc.](#)'s [Bianca Green](#) (and daughters representing Next Generation School and The High School of St. Thomas More) provided attendees and opportunity to both highlight their own awesomeness and the awesomeness of the women around them who are role models and mentors.

[Erin Tarr of Be the Benchmark](#) and [Chambanamoms.com](#) sponsored the “Central Illinois Women to Know Wall” featuring noteworthy women from Central Illinois who are making a difference in their community and the world by providing leadership and role modeling what it means to be an amazing woman! Each woman shared a meaningful quote and information about their current role and journey to inspire other young women.

[Class Act](#) students ages 10 – 14 provided the kick-off to the event, with musical entertainment and irrepressible spirit, led by entrepreneur [Jacklyn Loewenstein](#) and [Kat Downs](#). Their energy and enthusiasm was also caught at the #dayofthegirl Selfie Station, where volunteer [Delaney Cherveney](#) helped girls express themselves in fun and goofy ways – as they embraced their love of self!

Key volunteers without whom this event would not have taken place include the enthusiastic, youthful and enterprising [Kristen Plemons](#) of the University of Illinois, the forward thinking and encouraging [Gergana Slavova](#) of Intel, and the photo talents and ongoing support of both Giulia Barbieri, student at University High and Adam Tarr of Carle Sports Medicine.

The amazing women entrepreneurs at [Cream & Flutter](#) also were eager to support the event by providing a \$20 gift card for another lucky door prize winner!

Technical and sound support donated by [Bugbee's DJ Plus](#).

**Thank you to each and every participant, volunteer and attendee!**

**We look forward to seeing you next year at the**

**2<sup>nd</sup> annual Central Illinois Day of the Girl Rally!**