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Popular Teen Tech Week program at Tulsa library expanded to a month

■ The popular Teen Tech Week program is now a month long.

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AUTO RACING CHALLENGE



Zach Mangialomini and Mikeale Becraft race their mini solar cars on the sidewalk outside of the Charles Page Library on Thursday in Sand Springs. MICHAEL WYKE / Tulsa World

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Posted: Sunday, March 9, 2014 12:00 am | Updated: 7:14 am, Sun Mar 9, 2014.

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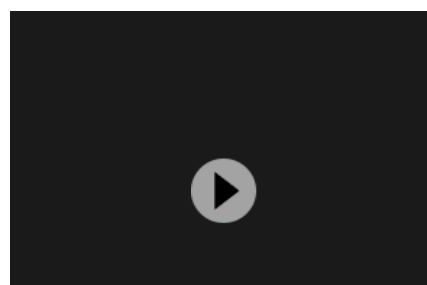
The Tulsa City-County Library likes Teen Tech Week so much, it has expanded it to a month.

The national initiative officially starts Sunday, and this year's theme is "DIY @ Your Library."

Christina Walsh, the library's teen services coordinator, said the purpose of the initiative is to connect teenagers with technologies provided by libraries, including databases, ebooks and DVDs, as well as to introduce them to the library's other non-print materials and resources.

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"We've got a lot of really great programs planned," Walsh said.

More than 30 events are scheduled at various branches throughout the month, including videogame nights, craft activities and a robotics presentation.

Walsh said this year's do-it-yourself theme is about giving teenagers the opportunity and space to explore and create.

On Thursday, the Charles Page library in Sand Springs held an event called "Faster Than the Speed of Light," where teens assembled solar cars from a kit and then

raced them. On March 20, the Broken Arrow South library will hold an "Artbots" event, where teens will create minibots that can move and draw.

"Teen Tech Week encourages teens to use libraries' nonprint resources for education and recreation, and to recognize that librarians are qualified, trusted professionals in the field of information technology," states the Young Adult Library Services Association, which began the national initiative in 2007.

Walsh said the Tulsa library began participating in the initiative in 2008, and the number of participating teens has grown yearly. Last year, about 1,000 took part in the program.

"So many of our teens don't have access to technology at home," Walsh said. "So this gives them the opportunity to use our resources."

During the month, librarians also emphasize to teens that they can help them responsibly navigate the world of social media.

The activities for the month were designed by librarians, with input from teenagers about what they'd like to do.

"It's really important to hear what they want to explore," Walsh said.

Among this year's programs will be a movie release party for the film "Divergent," based on the popular novel series. Games, crafts and trivia will be part of the fun at Hardesty Library on March 19.

Other activities include making 3-D paper toys, building a "Star Wars" project, and knitting and soap-making classes.

For a full listing of Teen Tech Month events, visit teens.tulsalibrary.org Some activities require advance registration.

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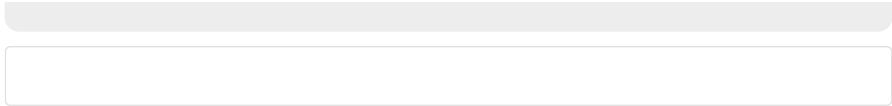


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