



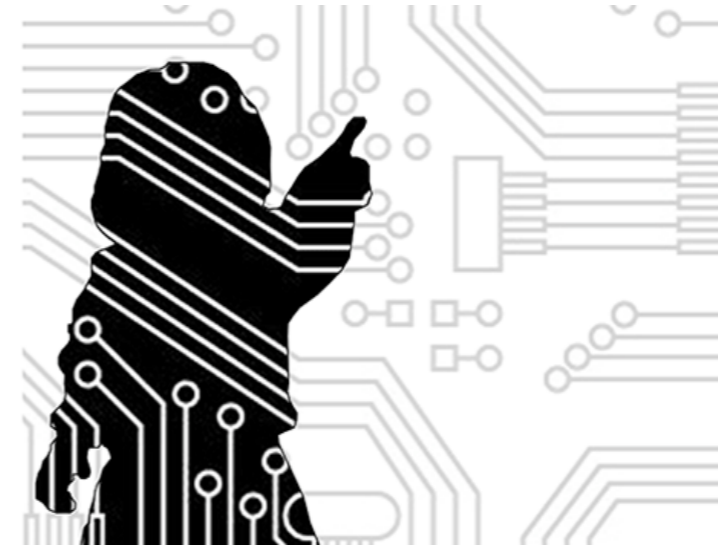
Electric girls

Young girls will explore the world of science and technology during a summer camp founded by Loyola students

Lauren Saizan

Circuits, wires and audio technology are all that's needed to turn a young girl's boring summer into a technology-fueled adventure.

Flor Serna, music industry senior, founded the Electric Girls summer camp. The camp takes place at Loyola, has four different sessions running from June 1 to July 31 and is open to girls ages 7-14. She said her goal for the camp is to spark young girls' interest in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through fun projects.



Naasha Dotiwala and Alanah Harris

"We're the only exclusively female STEM venture. There are others that exist in the city, but what's important is that girls have their own space to work on this kind of stuff because the way that they learn it is different from the way that boys learn it," Serna said.

Serna said that Electric Girls is important because it gives girls a chance to excel in a fast-growing job market.

"The reason why it's important is because STEM fields are growing at such a greater rate than non-STEM fields, and right now, only 24 percent are held by women," Serna said.

Maya Ramos, music industry sophomore, said that she first noticed Electric Girls after seeing it on Facebook.

"I knew Flor because we were in the music studio together. She started training me to be an engineer, and I did notice that we were the only two girls in there in a group of 20 guys that started out training," Ramos said.

Currently, Electric Girls is being taught as a program at Lycée Français and Louise S. McGehee, and this summer the program will be turned into a camp.

Ramos said that helping Serna came as a natural response when she first found out about Electric Girls. She now volunteers with Serna at the schools during the academic year.

"It's always something that I've been aware of because I've always been in science, math and music — three things where it's pretty male-dominated," Ramos said. "I started thinking that would be really cool and that I would love to help her out."

Serna and Ramos currently use different projects at the schools to teach girls about audio technology, engineering and more. Serna said that the girls will do projects similar to the ones that they are learning now at the summer camp.

"We're right now working on these sort of final projects, which are instruments that they built. So they physically build something, and then they use this electronic kit to make it so that when you touch different parts of the thing that you built, it will make different noises. And then they can program it on a computer to make whatever noises you want," Serna said.

Serna recently won \$250 at a "shark tank" competition at Pitch Loyola, an event sponsored by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Community Development of Loyola.

"With the \$250, it will go to a scholarship for one of the girls who really wants to participate in the camp but can't afford it," Serna said.

Naomi Yavneh, director of the university honors program, said that she is proud of Serna and is looking forward to meeting the new campers.

"The head of the middle school at Louise S. McGehee, Connie Harlan, has been raving about how excited the girls are, and I look forward to welcoming girls to Flor's camp this summer and to the honors program about five or six years from now," Yavneh said.