

Visit our Web site

www.thetelegram.com

CAREERS

Celebrating women in technology

BY PAT DOYLE

The Telegram

The achievements of female students, teachers and role models in trades, technology and science were celebrated at a two-day gathering in St. John's this week.

The event was held Thursday and Friday by Techsploration Newfoundland and Labrador.

Techsploration provides young women with opportunities to explore technical and technological-related occupations while creating awareness about the critical role of work in their lives. The goal is to expose them to traditionally male-dominated career fields.

In this province, Techsploration is a project of the Women in Resource Development Committee in partnership with the Avalon East School board and the College of the North Atlantic. Funding is provided by ExxonMobil.

Successful first year

Organizers said this week's event concluded a very successful pilot year for Techsploration.

During the year, eight teams of girls from schools in Trepassey, Mobile, Foxtrap, Mount Pearl, Bell Island and St. John's participated in tours and experiences including firefighting exercises, a construction tour, at-sea survival training exercises, manufacturing shops, helicopter engineering and soil testing.

As the gathering began Thursday, the girls sampled campus life with a night at a Memorial University residence and an opportunity to use the university's recreational facilities.

The teams went to the college of the North Atlantic Friday morning, where they presented their impressions and experiences about the particular role models and careers they have been working with since February.

Survival race

The young women also participated in a survival relay race, organized by Krista Parsons of the Offshore Safety and Survival Centre.

Speakers at a luncheon Friday were Education Minister Judy Foote, Ben Tulk, program director for the Avalon East School District and Jessica Shinkle, an engineer with ExxonMobil.

Later in the day participants joined their role models in workshops in such areas as computer programming and code problems, space scientist simulation, manufacturing, air quality testing, survival skills and building model oil rigs.

The companies which participated in the Techsploration program included Hibernia Management and Development Co., Xwave, Jacques Whitford Environment, Cougar Helicopters, Controls and Equipment Ltd., Guigne International, and the Offshore Safety and Survival Centre of the Marine Institute.