

Revenge of the Girls

The Nerd Girls of Tufts University bring solar-powered vehicle to Lynn, combat stereotype

LYNN "The Nerd Girls" of Tufts University steered their way to Girls Incorporated of Lynn Friday with their solar-powered car in tow.

"The Nerd Girls" are a group of female engineering students at Tufts who have taken on the challenge of building a solar-powered car while smashing the myth that science and math is not for girls.

Girls and young women who attend the school-age childcare and middle school programs at Girls Inc. checked out the energy

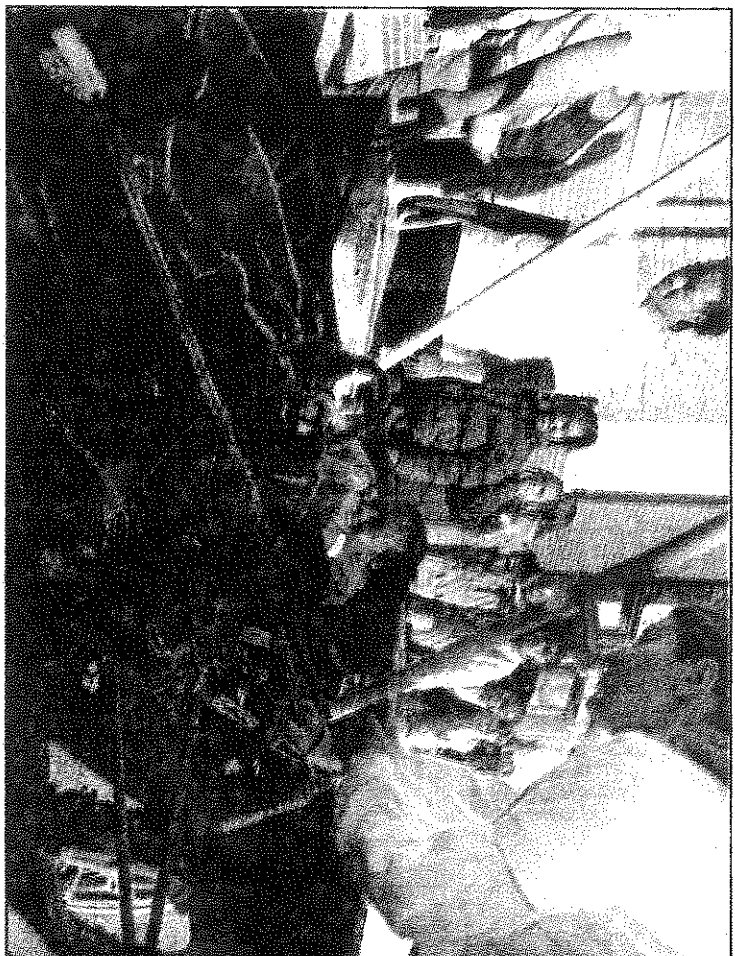
efficient and environmentally friendly car while also having a chance to chat with the diverse and interesting women who built it.

The solar car, named Annie E. B., is part of an effort at Tufts to break the stereotype that girls and women who are interested in science, engineering and math are geeks or nerds. The goal behind their efforts is to attract girls and women to engineering and science careers.

Girls Inc. shares that goal and invited the "Nerd Girls" to visit as part of "Girls, Power and the Envi-

ronment," a program the organization is currently running for the middle school members, which provides girls the opportunity to experiment with electricity, solar and water power through a series of hands-on projects.

According to the Nerd Girls, being a female engineer often comes with the stigma of being a geek and lacking social skills or non-technical hobbies. The group of Tufts women, some of whom have danced in the Nutcracker and have sung at the Apollo Theatre, want to change that stigma.



Girls Incorporated's Zakkiyah Williams takes the driver's seat of the solar-powered car as Tufts University engineering student Megan Schwartz, right, explains its function during a presentation at Girls Incorporated's Portland Street Friday afternoon.

HEAD PHOTO