

## **Framingham: Girl Scouts STEM conference**

**Sunday**

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Natalie Chenard, 12, of Norfolk, left, and Alexis Andrews, 13, of Norfolk, perform an experiment during the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts (GSEMA) fifth annual STEM Conference and Expo at the Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center in Framingham on Sunday. [Daily News and Wicked Local Photo/Dan Holmes]

[Additional photos](#)

FRAMINGHAM - Meghan Mello enjoys being outside.

Now, the 17-year-old Raynham resident is eagerly learning more about how the world around her works.

"I like the curiosity of it," she said of learning about science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, topics. "I want to understand how things happen and why they happen."

Mello joined girls in sixth through 12th grade from throughout eastern Massachusetts Sunday to participate in hands-on workshops, meet representatives of businesses and schools and learn more about future career paths in STEM fields at the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts' fifth annual STEM Conference and Expo. Mello, for example, learned about filtering drinking water as well as botany and cells.

The event, held at the Sheraton Framingham, drew about 180 girls, said Sacha Lu, associate director of program collaborations for Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts.

Organizers hope to inspire girls and connect them with mentors, Lu said.

"Our whole goal of this event is to provide girls with that opportunity to make connections with other folks in the STEM field," she said.

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In one workshop, girls learned programming skills as they worked with games and completed other tasks.

Workshop facilitators such as Susan Adams, a retired Comcast executive, said they hope to teach girls to not be afraid to experiment and encourage them to learn skills necessary to fill the many open STEM jobs.

Caroline Kidd, 13, of Natick, learned about making packaging materials from natural materials in one workshop.

"I like to learn about the way things are," Kidd said of her interest in STEM.