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Lilith Computer Group Hosts First Annual Middle School Fair

by **Kathy Price**, Community Partnerships Resource Teacher

The Lilith Computer Group, a collaboration of University of Wisconsin - Madison, MMSD and community volunteers, hosted its first annual Computer Fair for sixty-two middle school students on May 1 on the UW College of Engineering campus. The student participants, mainly girls, are members of after-school Lilith Computer Clubs that operate at Jefferson, O'Keefe, Sennett and eight middle schools.

The Lilith Fair offered opportunities for sixth to eighth graders to learn from female role models working in the computer field and explore technical careers through hands-on activities. UW-Madison College of Engineering staff and faculty teamed with other volunteers and local computer consultants to design and stage interactive sessions for students throughout the day.

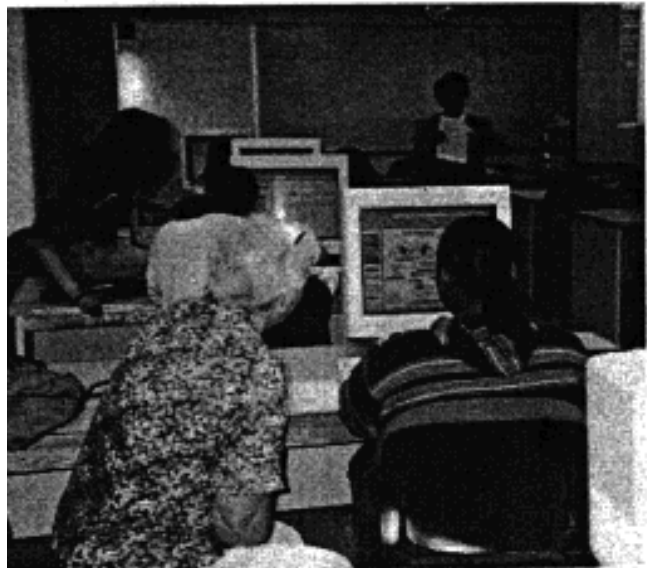
The event grew out of a research paper, titled *Helping to Bring Girls and Computers Together*, written last year by Memorial High School sophomore Susannah Camic. The paper outlined the barriers young girls face in gaining needed computer expertise. It caught the attention of UW faculty and community groups who joined with MMSD staff to develop the four after-school clubs now operating mainly in middle school girls, and to launch the annual Lilith Computer Fair.

The Fair was funded through the UW College of Engineering's Tanghe Foundation for Women in Science. Support for the school clubs is also provided by MMSD, the Dane County Youth Commission and the American Association of University

Women (AAUW).

MMSD staff members who are involved with the individual school clubs are: Jill Olsen, Jefferson; Bonnie Moschkau, O'Keefe; Tina Dunn, Sennett; and **Beth Billingham**, **Cynthia**

Kreinke and **Marci Starks**. Wright. Staff members who are members of the Steering Committee are: Rose Willmann, TAG resource teacher; **Barb Spitz**, Instructional Technologies; and **Kathy Price**, Partnerships. Susannah Camic, now completing her junior year at Memorial, represents MMSD students on the steering committee.



Jefferson Middle School's Jill Olsen, left, joins enthusiastic participants in a *PhotoShop* session by Mary Baldwin (rear) at the First Annual *Lilith* Computer Fair Friday, May 1 on the University of Wisconsin's College of Engineering campus.
