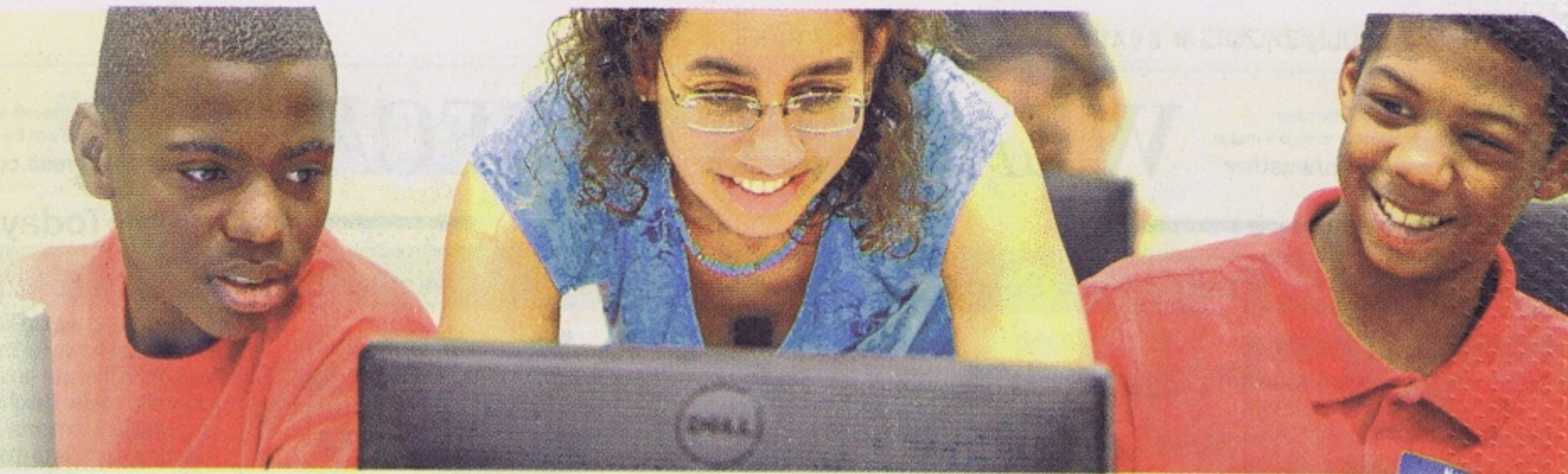


# SMARTER CAMP

Weeklong sessions, field trips give scholars insight on uses of science, math and technology around the Tri-State **LOCAL, 4A**



# 27

Saturday  
July 2013



# 78° / 53°

Clouds giving  
way to some sun

One dollar

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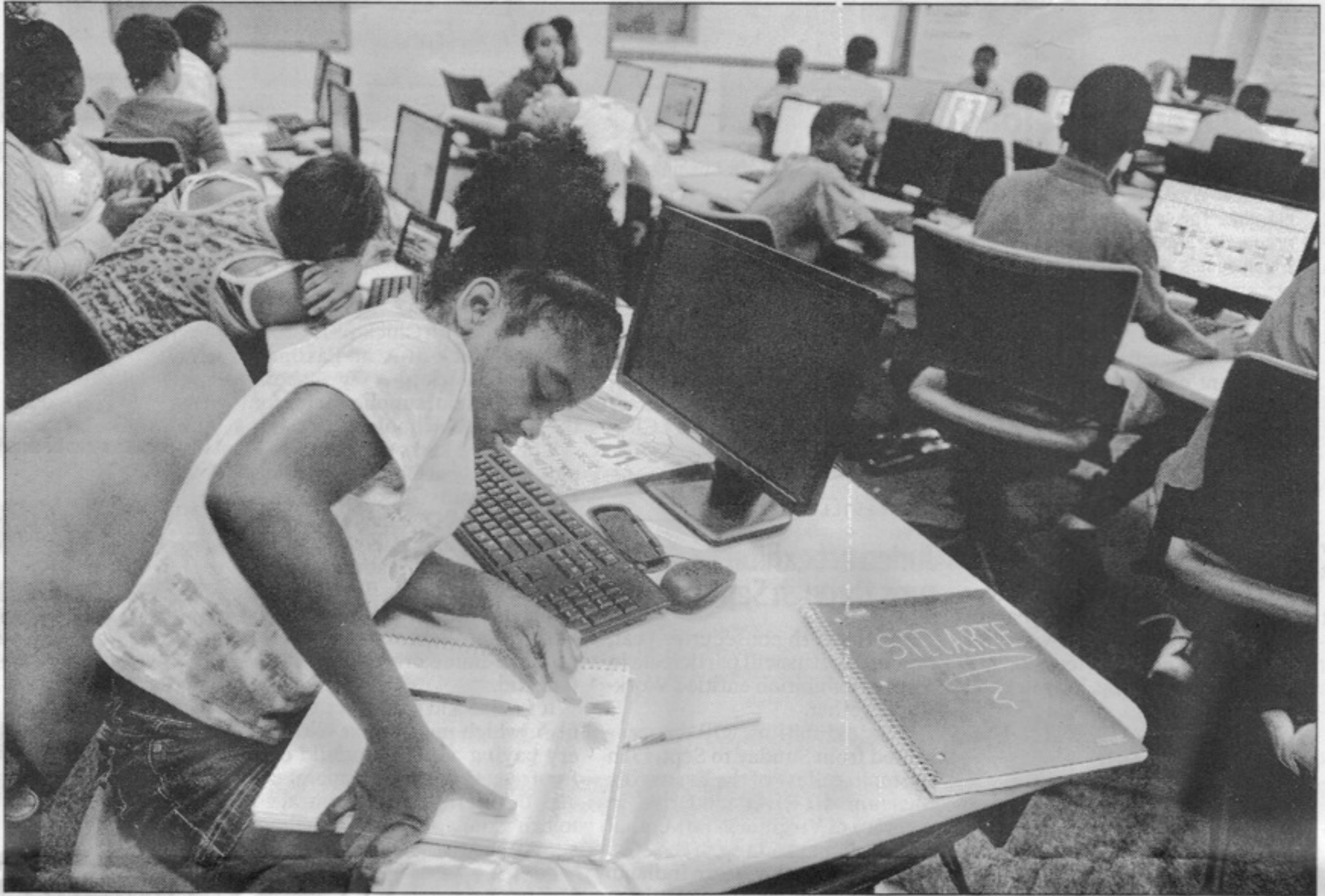
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# SMARTER use of summer



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MOLLY BARTELS / COURIER & PRESS

Euraina Johnson, 11, examines fingerprints she made using her graphite pencil during a presentation on forensic science by Evansville police Sgt. James VanCleave. The class was part of SMARTER (Science, Mathematics and Research Training in Evansville), a weeklong day camp that introduces students to science's different uses, at Ivy Tech in Evansville on Friday.

## ■ Classes, field trips give students insight on science

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The Chinese bird flu isn't on the radar of many 11-year-olds, but Euraina Johnson can tell you how many people have died from the illness and how fast it's spreading.

But then, Euraina isn't in most summer camp programs.

She and 25 other fifth through eighth graders are participating in a weeklong day camp called SMARTER, an acronym for Science, Mathematics and Research Training in Evansville. The program is dedicated to helping young students develop an interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), learn new skills and get excited about

learning.

The students not only have worked on research projects throughout the week, but they've heard from different guest speakers and took a field trip on Thursday to the Toyota plant in Gibson County.

This is the first year for the program, but camp leader Talitha Washington said she hopes that not only will it continue in Evansville, but that it will be a pilot program that can spread to other communities.

"I kind of want to develop a framework where other people can actually run a STEM camp," Washington said, "(Like) how do you do it and kind of make the best of it. Because during the summertime you want to have fun and learn something at the same time."

**SHINING  
LIGHT**



VanCleave talks about the science behind fingerprints to a class of fifth through eighth graders at the weeklong day camp.

She said she hopes the students continue to take an interest in science and math throughout high school and, maybe, into college as well.

"I hope that the students take from this that science and math is fun, and they can actually create things, and explore it and be engaged with it, and enjoy it,"

she said. "Hopefully, as a result of this program they'll have more interest in STEM, and perhaps later on in life they'll enter a STEM career. That's the end goal. We'll see how that happens in 15 years or so."

The students formed research

See SMARTER, 7A





MOLLY BARTELS / COURIER & PRESS

Talitha Washington, center, helps BJ Bowling, 12, left, and Jacob Washington, 12, with their project during SMARTE (Science, Mathematics and Research Training in Evansville), a weeklong day camp that introduces students to different topics in science, technology, engineering and math at Ivy Tech in Evansville on Friday.

## SMARTE from 4A

teams earlier in the week, and chose a topic to study in-depth. They would then report what they learned to the rest of the campers through posters and a presentation.

Euraina and her partners' topic was the Chinese bird flu.

"Well, we were going to research 'Hello Kitty,'" Euraina said, "then Dr. Washington came by, and we just started talking about China and she's like, 'Have you heard about China's bird flu?' We thought that was interesting, so we just researched it, and it is going very well."

And although she has loved learning about the flu and all of the important details of the illness

— that's not her favorite part of camp.

"(Thursday) was my favorite day because we went to Toyota, and we saw how they built the cars — it was really, really hard for them to build the cars," Euraina said. "If you saw how hard they work, then you should accept the car that you get."

Watez Phelps, program chair for hospitality administration at Ivy Tech, said he's working with the campers to help them start thinking about the future — looking into what it will take in high school to continue their education.

"It's very, very important that we get them in that mindset of what's going to happen after high school — whether it's gainful employment, or going on to postsecondary education or as Ivy

Tech provides in addition to that — vocational skills — if they're going on to a technical trade."

A variety of professors and professionals with different science and math backgrounds spoke with the campers via Skype throughout the week, including Ivy Tech Professor Donna Zimmerman, who discussed robotics, and Willie Williams from NASA, who discussed space exploration and spacecraft. Sgt. James VanCleave of the Evansville Police Department spoke to the campers Friday morning about the science of forensic investigations.

Washington, an associate professor of mathematics at Howard University in Washington, D.C., is a former assistant professor of mathematics at the

University of Evansville and a graduate of Bosse High School. She also serves on the board of the Memorial Community Development Corp. She said part of the weeklong curriculum is note-taking the old fashioned way — pen and notebook paper. Washington collects the campers' notebooks throughout the week, heads to Dunkin' Donuts and reads them, as well as making comments or suggestions on how they can improve their notetaking skills.

The Memorial Community Development Corp., supported by Toyota Indiana, Ivy Tech Community College, Farm Boy Food Service and Infinite Scholars of Evansville, sponsored this camp — making it free for all of the participants.