



Girls IT target

WOMEN are increasingly outnumbered by men in information technology, but Griffith University is trying to correct the balance.

The Technology Can Take You Anywhere Expo was held at the Logan Campus last week, with more than 300 girls taking part.

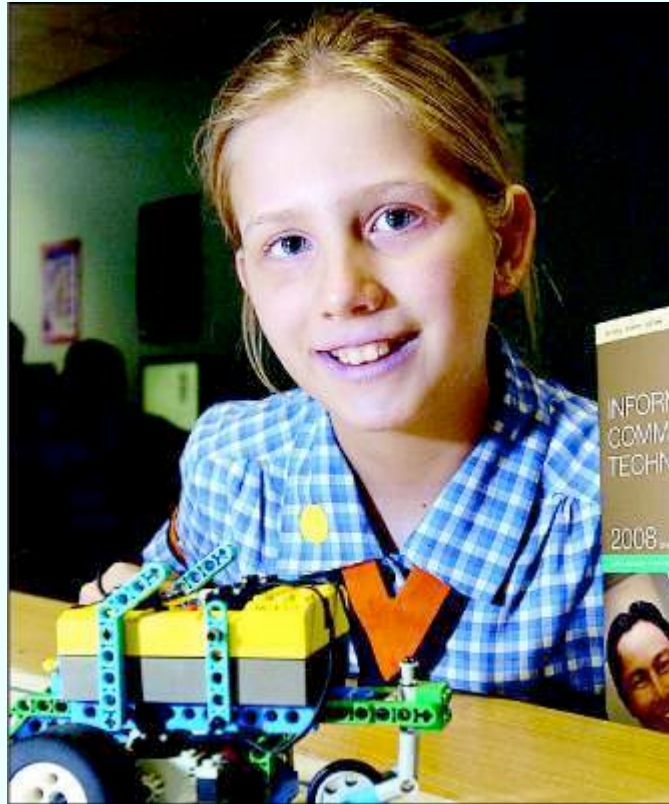
Co-ordinator Jenine Beekhuyzen said the day was part of a statewide series of three events aimed at addressing the critical shortage of women learning vital information technology skills.

"There's a shortage of IT graduates of both sexes entering the workforce, but in the female population the situation is dire," she said.

"Just 15-25 per cent of the Australian information and communications technology workforce is female, and with male students outnumbering females in Queensland by more than six to one, this will take some years to change."

Ms Beekhuyzen said it was essential for parents and teachers to encourage girls to explore technology careers while they were choosing subjects in high school.

"IT skills are now an integral part of many amazing careers, ranging from multimedia and games development, graphic and web design and software design,



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■ Balance change . . . St Catherine's Primary school student Hanah Reece with a model in the robotics lab.

e-commerce and marketing," she said.

"Girls are locking themselves out of these options."

The event featured presentations from a panel of leading female IT executives from industry giants such as IBM, Westpac, and e-marketing gurus Icedmedia, as well as govern-

ment and education sectors.

Topics included online music piracy and girls took part in a variety of hands-on workshops.

John Paul College, Loganlea State High, Mabel Park State High and Shailer Park State High attended with several Brisbane schools.