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Streaming II: *STAR Net*

It has been my particular goal since 2014, as Board Director/Trustee for both the Westmoreland Library Network (WLN™) and the Murrysville Community Library, to build capacity for STEM in WLN public libraries. What I mean by that is to build staff capacity for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through informed, standards-based staff professional development, and, with that, development/offering of STEM products and programming.

Successful examples so far are Storytime STEM-packs™ professional development and product from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Math & Science Collaborative, our outstanding collaborators, and Power Library for Science Fairs, in collaboration with the Carnegie Science Center and its prestigious Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair. For the latter, 6th to 12th graders are learning how to retrieve informed references and write proper bibliographies. For the former, the Collaborative has taken staff and preK-4 from coupled science kits and Summer Reading books to hands-on Bee-Bot® robots and learning algorithms. PreK-4 and algorithms! If you missed that, ask to sign up next time. Each participating library has six robots ready to go.

As I wrote recently, TechNook is the next to come, and with it, the capacity to stream STEM programming (and other programming too) for a large-screen TV in a theater-like environment. So, what is out there to stream that is both informed and STEM standards-based? Let me tell you about just one substantial resource, first in their own words.

“The STAR Library Network (*STAR Net*) is a hands-on learning network for libraries and their communities across the country. *STAR Net* focuses on helping library professionals build their STEM skills by providing ‘science-technology activities and resources’ (STAR) and training to use those resources.

“*STAR Net* is built upon a strong network of collaborators and partners, led by the Space Science Institute’s (SSI) National Center for Interactive Learning (NCIL).” Partners from the library world include the American Library Association’s Public Programs Office, Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), and Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA). There are various other academic and institutional partners. Funding is provided by the National Science Foundation (NASA Science Mission Directorate) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services

To see the vast resource pool from *STAR Net*, you can go to and begin to explore at: <http://www.starnetlibraries.org>. Just focusing on some of its kids’ streaming videos, grades K-4, 5-8, and 9-12, which is the founding intent for a TechNook audience, you can go directly to: <https://www.nasa.gov/stem> to start your tour. All of the resources

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shown here are available for home viewing, just as are scheduled, live space events, but, with so much content available, that can become bewildering for kids just working from home (although home feed can be facilitated by libraries, which is a discussion for another day, when we talk about TechNook 365).

The sheer size of this resource pool is why WLN libraries need to promote *STAR Net* in an organized and guiding way. The truth: Except for taking advantage of *STAR Net's* extremely popular offering of certified safe, solar glasses for Solar Eclipse 2017, WLN libraries have largely not, for various reasons.

Solar Eclipse 2017 drew hundreds of families to the Murrysville Community Library alone for example, one of the library's most successful events ever, and showed how interested patrons, including children, are in space science and technology. It's time enough gone by to build on Solar Eclipse 2017 now. That's what TechNook and *STAR Net* have to offer for kids, as well as for adults of course.

Moreover, there are more "unconventional" library resources like this for children and adults that are available, and I will tell you about them next time.

Charles B. Greenberg,
WLN Board President