

## DECEMBER 2015 DIRECTOR'S NEWSLETTER



Dear **TechStars** Families,

December is a time for families and friends to gather and celebrate the Winter Holidays. Whether your family celebrates Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, we know that children's thoughts turn to giving and receiving gifts. Let your child select a canned good to donate to a local food bank for hungry families or contribute a few coins to the Salvation Army kettle. Our staff donated unwrapped gifts to **Toys for Tots** in place of a gift exchange with each other. Helping others is a wonderful way to reflect on our own good fortune and more deeply appreciate the many gifts that we receive now and throughout the year.

We are proud to offer you the opportunity to purchase our **Gift of Learning** for your child. This annual holiday promotion provides 12 weeks of **TechStars** technology classes with all added value benefits at a discounted rate. This offer is available to both new and current students. You may wish to share this opportunity with grandparents and other relatives who ask what gift to give your child. Printed copies of this offer are available at each **TechStars** class site this month. Watch for more information about the **Gift of Learning** in the weekly newsletter you receive from your child's **TechStars** teacher.

Families who are gifting iPads during the holidays may also appreciate a "heads up" on which free apps to download and enjoy with the children. Steven Noonoo of *eSchool News* shares **8 free iPad apps to encourage creativity in young learners** at <http://www.eschoolnews.com/2015/11/18/apps-creative-young-learners/2/>. Spend some relaxed time with your child exploring a few of these apps after the wrapping paper is cleared away.

A few "un-plugged" activities for your family sponsored by New Castle County include:

- **Holiday Open House at Rockwood**, Fri Dec 4 – Sun Dec 6. Enjoy holiday entertainment, children's activities, costumed characters, refreshments, and FREE photos with Santa! The event also includes a Youth Entrepreneur's Secret Santa Shoppe selling gifts for the whole family, tours of the holiday display in the museum, and a festive light display in the gardens surrounding the Mansion and Carriage House. Get more details and an event schedule at <http://www.nccde.org/936/Holiday-Open-House-at-Rockwood>.
- **Tree Lighting at Glasgow Park**, Fri Dec 11, 5-8 pm. Tree lighting at 6 pm. The event also includes caroling, music, refreshments, hayrides, and Santa's Workshop with activities and more. Bring your camera and take a picture of your child with Santa. Learn more at <http://www.nccde.org/938/Tree-Lighting-at-Glasgow-Park>.
- **Meet Santa and his Pony at Carousel Park**, **Sat Dec 12, 11 am-3 pm**. Bring your camera to take a photo of your child with Santa and his pony, visit Santa's workshop, make a craft, and then stay to explore the Kids Corral and take a hayride around the park. Read event details at <http://www.nccde.org/937/Meet-Santa-and-His-Pony-at-Carousel-Park>.

*New Castle County is proud to sponsor these FREE EVENTS, however, to help those less fortunate, please bring a nonperishable food item or new mittens, hats, or scarves for the Giving Tree.*

More local “un-plugged” holiday activities to get families in the holiday spirit follow:

- Bundle up your family and head out to one or more festive annual parades. Consider **Winterfest/Newark** on Fri, Dec 4, **Claymont Community Coalition Christmas Parade** on Sat, Dec 5, **Delaware City Christmas Parade** on Sat, Dec 12 or **Elsmere Holiday Parade** on Sun, Dec 13. Read more details and get parade tips at <http://northdelaware.happeningmag.com/holiday-parades-2015>.
- The Nutcracker is a perennial favorite with many families. Choose from performances by the Delaware Dance Company at U of D's Mitchell Hall on Dec 11, 12 & 13, <http://delawaredancecompany.org/nutcracker/>; Wilmington Ballet at the Playhouse on Rodney Square on Dec 12 & 13, <http://wilmingtonballet.org/nutcracker/>; or Brandywine River Museum's "Dance Me a Story" with children acting out the parts of this traditional tale under the direction of dancer and choreographer Lisa Oster on Dec 12, <http://www.brandywine.org/museum/events/nutcracker-%E2%80%9Cdance-me-story%E2%80%9D>.
- Enjoy a fun, upbeat musical experience at Wilmington's World Café Live with the Peanut Butter and Jams **We Kids Rock Band Holiday Concert** on Sat, Dec 19. Doors open at 10:30 am with show beginning at 11 am. Tickets are \$10/person. Learn more at <http://queentickets.worldcafelive.com/event/901295-we-kids-rock-band-s-holiday-wilmington/>.
- The Brandywine Zoo hosts **Noon Year's Eve** on Thurs, Dec 31 with family activities that include a toast of sparkling apple cider when the clock strikes 12 noon. Visit [www.brandywinezoo.org](http://www.brandywinezoo.org) to get details about this celebration as well as learn how to adopt a North American Otter for the holidays and discover special discounts at the **Zootique's** Holiday Gift Shop Sale.

Whatever holidays you celebrate and whatever traditions you share with your children, treasure this time together and know that you are building memories your child will value for a lifetime. Warm wishes from our **TechStars** family to your family for a safe and happy Winter Holiday Season!

Sincerely,

**Roni Deely**

Owner/Director

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TechStars by Computer Explorers of New Castle County



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