

## DECEMBER 2018 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 give to a local food bank for hungry families, contribute a few coins to the Salvation Army kettle or donate a toy to a less fortunate boy or girl. Our teachers donated unwrapped gifts to **Toys for Tots** in place of a staff gift exchange again this year. 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.

Families who are planning computer gifts for their young children this holiday season should consider many factors. Are you seeking a device that is portable for your child to take with him/her when traveling outside the home? A tablet is the answer. Are you seeking a home computer that will reinforce mouse/cursor skills to practice and develop hand-eye coordination as well as fine motor skills? A laptop or desktop is the answer. Instead of a gift specifically for the child, a family tablet or laptop/desktop that everyone will use may be the best choice. This option can be more economical in the long run and will grow with your child. When introducing the tablet, laptop or desktop to your child be sure to talk about responsible online behavior and set healthy screen time limits. Plan time in your family schedule for using the computer with your child to explore common interests and encourage him/her to show you his/her computer skills. With all types of digital devices, a plan that sets usage limits for everyone in your family is important. [Children and Media Tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics](https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Children-and-Media-Tips.aspx) offers tips on navigating the ever changing digital landscape families face today, <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Children-and-Media-Tips.aspx>. **TechStars** applauds the American Academy of Pediatrics for recognizing that technology, when used thoughtfully, can benefit young children. AAP guidelines support our time-tested **TechStars** model which delivers quality technology time to our young students in a small group setting with educator approved software/hardware and trained, actively involved instructors.

New Castle County offers several festive and seasonal "un-plugged" activities for your family during the month of December:

- **Holiday Open House at Rockwood Park**, 4651 Washington Street Extension, Wilmington, DE 19808. Sat, Dec 1, 5-9 pm. (Also Fri, Nov 30, 5-9 pm with Tree lighting Fri, Nov 30, 6 pm.) Bring your family out for the 18th annual Holiday Open House with exceptional entertainment, fun festive crafts, costumed characters, refreshments, food trucks and FREE photos with Santa! New this year, free parking and shuttle from Rockwood Office Park. This event includes the Holiday Shoppe with gifts for the whole family, tours of the holiday display in the museum and a joyous light display in the gardens surrounding the Mansion and Carriage House. Enjoy University of Delaware Children's Choir, First State Ballet Theater, Kathryn Ciminello's Dance Troupe, Delaware Arts Conservancy, Pieces of a Dream, Fierce Dance Academy, Imagination Players & more! Make a disadvantaged child's wishes come true; bring an unwrapped toy to donate to Toys for Tots. <https://www.nccde.org/936/Holiday-Open-House-at-Rockwood>.
- **Tree Lighting Celebration and Holiday Market at Glasgow Park Bank Barn**, Glasgow Regional Park, 2275 Pulaski Highway, Newark, DE 19702. Fri, Dec 7, 5-9 pm. Market opens 5 pm. Tree lighting at 7 pm. Celebrate the holidays with holiday music, refreshments and Santa's Workshop with activities and more. Bring your camera to take a FREE picture with

Santa! Then shop the Festive Holiday Market featuring gifts, local foods, holiday decorations and more. Help families in our community who are less fortunate; bring a canned good or nonperishable food item donation for the Food Bank of Delaware.

<https://www.nccde.org/938/Tree-Lighting-Celebration-at-Glasgow-Par>

- Find more information about FREE Santa Visits at <https://www.nccde.org/1427/FREE-Santa-Visits>, FREE Holiday Concerts at <https://www.nccde.org/1426/FREE-Holiday-Concerts> and FREE Holiday Programs at <https://www.nccde.org/1428/FREE-Holiday-Programs>.

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

- Bundle up your family and head out to a festive annual parade: **Claymont Christmas Parade** on Sat, Dec 1, from 10 am-Noon, <http://www.claymontchristmasparade.com/>. **Home for the Holidays Marketplace and Parade** on Sat, Dec 1, 3-9 pm, <https://www.visitdelawarevillages.com/events-calendar/home-for-the-holidays-marketplace-and-parade/>. **Delaware City Holiday Parade of Lights Christmas Parade** on Sat, Dec 10, at 6 pm, <https://delawarecity.delaware.gov/events/412/christmas-parade/>. (Note: **Elsmere Holiday Parade** is cancelled for 2018 due to ongoing structural repairs of the town’s bridge.)
- **Zoo Lights and Christmas Nights!** 3 Palms Zoo & Education Center, 924 Blackbird Forest Rd, Clayton, DE 19938. Fri, Nov 30 through Sat, Dec 29, recurring weekly on Fri & Sat, 6-8 pm weather permitting. Featured displays include: The Goose & the Golden Egg, Candy Land, Classic Nativity, Rudolph & Friends and the historic Josephine Fountain. Find 15 gorgeous decorated trees throughout the grounds; each personalized with an individual theme. Enjoy a walk through a festive woodland & see the Zoo at night. Evenings are your best opportunity to see our Foxes, Owl, Raccoon and other nocturnal animals awake and active in their habitats. Roast marshmallows, sip hot chocolate, hark the holiday sounds, visit with Mrs. Claus and whisper your special Christmas wishes in Santa's ear. Stop by the Souvenir Stand for that perfect gift, memento or special ornament! \$5/person. All proceeds go to the care & feeding of rescued animals at 3 Palms. <http://3palmszoo.org/events/>
- **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 Sat, Dec 1 & Sun, Dec 2, <http://delawaredancecompany.org/performances/nutcracker/>; the Wilmington Ballet at the Playhouse on Rodney Square on Sat, Dec 8 & Sun, Dec 9; or First State Ballet Theatre at the Grand Opera House on Fri, Dec 21, Sat, Dec 22 & Sun, Dec 23, <https://www.thegrandwilmington.org/productions/5862-the-nutcracker>.
- **Annie** is the Everett Theatre's 2018 holiday family performance. The Everett Theatre, 47 W. Main St., Middletown, DE 19709. Dec 7, 8, 9, 14, 15 & 16; show times and prices vary. Based on the popular comic strip and adapted from the Tony Award-winning Best Musical, this performance is sure to entertain your family. With equal measures of pluck and positivity, little orphan Annie charms everyone's hearts despite a next-to-nothing start in 1930s New York City. Annie is determined to find the parents who abandoned her years ago on the doorstep of an orphanage run by the cruel Miss Hannigan. Annie eventually foils Miss Hannigan's evil machinations, finding a new home and family in billionaire, Oliver Warbucks, his personal secretary, Grace Farrell, and a lovable mutt named Sandy. <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=91402>
- **Winter Arts Festival** Delaware Art Museum, 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806. Fri, Dec 7, 12-8 pm & Sat, Dec 8, 9 am - 4 pm. Celebrate the season at the Museum during this family-friendly two-day event. Shop for holiday gifts from 20 regional artisans, listen to festive music performed by local choirs and enjoy the Museum's seasonal decorations. Winter-themed art projects will be available for children and their families. Snacks and beverages will be for sale from Toscana in the Museum's Thronson Café. The Museum Store will offer Member specials throughout the weekend. Free. [https://www.delart.org/event/winter-arts-festival-2018/?instance\\_id=13318](https://www.delart.org/event/winter-arts-festival-2018/?instance_id=13318) and <https://www.delart.org/event/winter-arts-festival-2->

[2018/?instance\\_id=13320](https://www.delart.org/event/holiday-house-tour-celebrating-timeless-classics/?instance_id=13320). (Extra just for Mom & Dad. Make the DE Art Museum your holiday headquarters this weekend and enjoy the Museum's **Holiday House Tour** Sat, Dec 8, 10 am-4 pm. This year's theme is Celebrating Timeless Classics. Tickets \$35-\$39.

[https://www.delart.org/event/holiday-house-tour-celebrating-timeless-classics/?instance\\_id=13363](https://www.delart.org/event/holiday-house-tour-celebrating-timeless-classics/?instance_id=13363))

- **Breakfast with Santa** at the Brandywine Zoo, Brandywine Park, 101 North Park Drive, Wilmington. Sat, Dec 8 & Sun, Dec 9, 9-10 am. Celebrate the holidays by enjoying a pancake, egg & sausage breakfast with Santa! Share your holiday wishes, bring your camera to take photos with Santa and some animal friends and enjoy a few up-close animal encounters all before the zoo opens. Breakfast is provided by Janssen's Market. PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED. SPACE IS VERY LIMITED FOR THIS EVENT, SO PLEASE REGISTER EARLY. Members \$19, Non-members \$22. All participants ages 18 months and up must pay program fee. <https://brandywinezoo.org/event/breakfast-with-santa-4/2018-12-08/>
- **Lunch with Santa and Holiday Marketplace** Downtown Dover Partnership, 101 W Lookerman St 1A, Dover, DE 19904. Sat, Dec 8, 15 & 22, 11 am - 2 pm. Bring your child out to enjoy "Lunch With Santa" and enjoy shopping the Holiday Gift Marketplace to find the perfect gifts to complete your holiday shopping list! Food trucks, holiday games/activities and entertainment in the Lookerman Way Plaza (126 W. Lookerman Street). After lunch line up to see Santa in his house. Bring your camera and take pictures. Please continue to follow this page as more details will be available soon. [https://www.facebook.com/events/140290373311092/?event\\_time\\_id=140290379977758](https://www.facebook.com/events/140290373311092/?event_time_id=140290379977758)
- **Holiday Family Festivities** Delaware Art Museum, 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806. Wed, Dec 26 – Sun, Dec 30, 10 am - 4 pm. Bring your family to the Museum over the holidays for festive art making and family-friendly celebration. Create watercolor bracelets and bouquets in Kids' Corner and find favorite works of art in the galleries. Free with Museum admission. [https://www.delart.org/event/holiday-family-festivities-2018/?instance\\_id=13644](https://www.delart.org/event/holiday-family-festivities-2018/?instance_id=13644)
- **Noon Year's Eve** at the Brandywine Zoo, Brandywine Park, 101 North Park Drive, Wilmington. Mon, Dec 31, 11 am – 12:15 pm. Celebrate Zoo-style by ringing in the New Year at NOON! Enjoy games, crafts, a celebratory atmosphere and a sparkling cider toast as the clock strikes 12 Noon. Program takes place in the zoo so dress for the weather! Guest passes will not be accepted. Members Free & Non-members \$5/3 years and older. <https://brandywinezoo.org/event/noon-years-eve-3/> Learn details about this celebration, discover when Santa will visit the zoo and find the perfect holiday gift for your favorite young animal lover at [www.brandywinezoo.org](http://www.brandywinezoo.org).

Whatever holidays you celebrate and whatever traditions you share with your children, treasure this time together and know that you are building memories with your child that will last a lifetime. Warmest 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



[www.computerexplorers.com/de](http://www.computerexplorers.com/de)