

# Summer school just graduated with Terra's KidsCollege

7/20/2011 – The News Messenger

Children enroll in Terra's KidsCollege



Instructor David Lester gives Keegan Kuhn, 11, some guitar pointers Tuesday at Terra Community College's KidsCollege. More than 400 kids in first through eighth grades signed up for creative arts, science, technology and math classes. / Daniel Carson/News-Messenger

FREMONT -- His eyes fixed straight down and zoned in on his guitar strings, David Lester imparted a quick bit of advice for his KidsCollege students.

"Remember, chords are to a guitar like words are to language," Lester said, as eight students looked down at their guitars and tried to follow along as the teacher strummed through a slow rendition of Jimmy Buffett's classic hit "Margaritaville."

KidsCollege 2011 continues today at Terra Community College, with more than 400 kids in grades one through eight enrolled in a full roster of 37 classes ranging from cake and cookie decorating to cha-cha for beginners.

Kern Center coordinator for apprentice and industrial training Amy Below said this is KidsCollege's 18th year at Terra.

Below said the program started at the college's former Cedar Street campus as a community outreach effort and has grown over the years. She said she has been involved with the annual event off and on since 1995.

"For the last few years, we've been running it for one week in July," Below said as she walked around Building B and showed off some of the afternoon classes involving dinosaurs, guitars, basketball and ballroom dance instruction.

Terra works with colleges and attends conferences to see what other schools are doing with similar summer events, Below said.

She said she had traveled to Chicago this year to attend a kids college programming seminar.

In one of the college's classrooms, children learned about dinosaurs and characteristics associated with different species.

Dinosaur class teacher Andrea Weis said the group of first- through fourth-graders were learning about the tyrannosaurus rex and talking about different dinosaurs' colors, spikes and plates.

"I like that they like eating other dinosaurs," said Kenny Dewey, 7, of Huron, as he and Shelby Dorsey, 7, of Bellevue, played with plastic dinosaurs in the back of the classroom.

In an adjacent classroom, Lester worked with students in grades seven and eight.

Lester said that most of his students didn't have any background in guitar and were learning basic chords.

"By the end of the week, we should learn to play four or five songs," Lester said.

Other classes offered at the KidsCollege included a basketball boot camp and dance to rumba.

Instructors Timothy and Annessia Nyman from Sandusky's Black Tie Dance Studio worked with six girls on their rumba and salsa technique in a small practice room near Terra's basketball gym.

Timothy Nyman said that he and his wife normally taught adults at their Sandusky studio and had been instructors for 15 years.

Nyman said this was his first time teaching at the Kids-College, and he described his fifth- through eighth-grade class as interested and willing to learn, with his younger students needing a little more direction.

"But they're all having fun," Nyman said.

KidsCollege classes runs through Thursday with a Green Day Kamp scheduled from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday.