

What is Random Fandom?

Starting in February 2023, the Hickory Public Library's Learning Lab and Youth Services department collaborated on a program series called "Random Fandom." The idea is to play on the appeal of large pop culture fandoms to get people back into and engaged with the library while also building The Learning Lab's brand as a tech focused makerspace.



The Learning Lab

The Hickory Public Library Learning Lab provides access to tools and technology that support learning, creativity, connection, and accessibility through hands-on learning. Random Fandom, hosted within The Lab, allowed a diverse audience of patrons to explore the resources. Random Fandom participants gained valuable experience with the equipment and often returned to utilize the equipment for their own projects, highlighting the lab's impact on community engagement.

Mario

For this event, we had a paper LED Mario blocks, a Mario themed perler bead station, a lucky star jar origami station, and a Mario themed photo booth.



This program took place in April 2023 following the release of *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*.

The theme of each Random Fandom was based around significant news and events in fandom culture



Pokémon

This event featured Pokémon terrariums with 3D printed bases and customizable Pokémon card playing mats.

Pokémon was the highest attended program with around 60 participants.



This program took place the week before Pokémon Day in February 2023.



Random Fandom allowed us to get the public engaged in creating with the library and The Learning Lab.

Collaborating with youth services brought more families to The Learning Lab when the typical audience was primarily adults.

Dungeons & Dragons

The D&D Random allowed us to make new community connections. We reached out to a local DM that was experienced in teaching both new and young players how to play D&D.

