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AT&T Makes \$100,000 Contribution to the NEA Foundation to Support CT STEM Academy

AT&T Aspire funding will support educator-led, community-based programs to engage under-resourced Connecticut students and their families in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Wallingford, Conn. (Sept. 22, 2017) — The NEA Foundation today announced that AT&T is making a \$100,000 contribution to support one of three educator-led, district-wide STEM initiatives the Foundation is funding this year. The CT STEM Academy is a vibrant, community-based program that has helped open the eyes of more than 15,000 Connecticut students and their families to STEM skills and careers since 2012.

“STEM skills—including attributes like critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork—are truly life skills,” says Harriet Sanford, President and CEO of the NEA Foundation. “AT&T’s contribution advances the NEA Foundation’s mission to support educators working with their communities to encourage students to incorporate STEM learning not only in their academics and future careers, but in their daily lives. Through programs like these, we aim to grow a STEM ecosystem that engages young people and their families from so many different backgrounds in communities across Connecticut and beyond.”

In addition to the CT STEM Academy, the NEA Foundation will launch major STEM initiatives in Colorado and Tennessee later this year. Together, these innovative programs have the potential to be replicated in schools across the country.

AT&T’s contribution to the NEA Foundation to support the work of the CT STEM Academy is a part of its flagship education initiative, AT&T Aspire.

“The need to get more students involved in STEM is greater now than ever. By 2020, there is likely to be a shortage of approximately 40 million high-skilled workers. When AT&T invests in education, we know we will see a return that will benefit all of us,” says John Emra, president of AT&T Connecticut, whose employees have mentored more than 3,000 students across the state as part of the Aspire program. “The return on this investment is a more educated generation of students regardless of background, more opportunities for our children, and more homegrown talent like the students

-- More --

served by the CT STEM Academy.”

The CT STEM Academy is a model program for supporting STEM learning through a broad range of community-based events and activities, including evening, after-school, and summer STEM camps, family STEM nights, academic bridge programs for at-risk youth, engineering design challenges, robotics clubs and competitions, and guest speakers and programs.

Educator led

Connecticut master educators have played instrumental roles in leading the CT STEM Academy’s programs and community partnerships. The CT STEM Academy has benefitted from the support of the Connecticut Education Association (CEA).

“CEA proudly provided initial funding to the program in its infancy and continues to support our members who have dedicated their time to nurturing this program and helping it grow and succeed in other communities,” says Sheila Cohen, CEA President. “This program is about bringing students, teachers, families, and communities together through STEM. It encourages students of color, girls, and special education students and lets them know that STEM is for them too.”

The grant will support the CT STEM Academy’s work as it continues to expand its offerings.

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AT&T Inc. is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. In 2013, more than \$130 million was contributed or directed through corporate-, employee-, social investment-, and AT&T Foundation-giving programs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T’s signature education initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring.

The NEA Foundation is a public charity founded by educators for educators to improve public education for all students. Since our beginning in 1969, the Foundation has served as a laboratory of learning, offering funding and other resources to public school educators, their schools, and districts to solve complex teaching and learning challenges. We believe that when educators unleash their own power, ideas, and voices, communities, schools, and students all benefit. Visit www.neafoundation.org for more information. Editor’s Note: Please use our correct name, the NEA Foundation. We are not the National Education Association Foundation.