



Dear Partner in STEM,

A National Science Foundation grant has been awarded to the Wake County Public School System who will partner with the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, NC State University, The Science House, and the Kenan Fellows to bring engaging, research driven STEM programs to rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders attending Knightdale High School and East Wake High School. Students will actively participate in inquiry based science, interact with scientists, and take steps to college and career readiness.

A component of the grant includes a STEM Mentorship, which will connect STEM role models to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. Through one on one relationship building, students will begin to bridge the gap between their high school to career pathway. Mentors will also focus on the importance of attendance, excellent behavior, and good study habits. Mentors will commit to monthly one hour sessions with their student. Mentors will attend a training session and also have a chance to interact with their student in a large group setting prior to the first one on one session.

It is no secret that North Carolina and the nation are in desperate need of a qualified workforce in science, technology, engineering, and math. This need is only going to grow deeper as it is projected for North Carolina to demand 212,820 STEM jobs by 2018, according to a STEM Workforce Study from Georgetown University. Just recently, Raleigh was a close second in the United States in creating the most tech jobs. Raleigh-Durham saw a 39% increase in STEM jobs over 2004-2014, earning the title of fastest growth in the nation, according to Forbes. Despite tremendous growth and need, our students are falling short on math and science skills. This leads to students seeking non-STEM related careers and the pool of qualified applicants becoming less and less. As a result, employers are competing for a limited number of workers graduating in STEM fields leading to many jobs going unfilled.

As an employer, it is wise to take advantage of an opportunity such as this for many reasons. It is vital in the development of employee leadership skills and leads to greater employee satisfaction as a result of the authentic engagement in the field, which in turn leads to increased employee retention. Greater brand visibility and recognition in the community and surrounding area is also afforded by this opportunity. Along with a clearer community understanding of company practices and outreach efforts, your company will be tapping in to the STEM community and becoming part of a larger movement in STEM education.

We are looking for business hosts who are committed to STEM education to raise awareness and interest in STEM fields and opportunities for students through the STEM Mentorship program. The opportunity to partner together is a great example of how business and education can work together to create a STEM ready future for our students. The mentors will also yield many benefits as they build a lasting relationship, inspire young minds, and impact the workforce of the future.

Please consider being a part of this new and exciting program offered to an underrepresented population of students that deserve your time and talents. Please know your company will be contributing to the community in a rich and powerful way.

Together we can create a talent pool of a future STEM workforce to enhance the overall quality of life for all citizens of Raleigh-Durham, NC.

Thank you for your time,  
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