Science Foundation Arizona Supports Teachers and Increases STEM Clubs in Arizona

JP Morgan Chase provided seed-funding for professional development and implementation of STEM Clubs

PHOENIX (Aug. 26, 2014) – Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz), a nonprofit public-private partnership that makes strategic investments to improve academic performance in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), has awarded 118 Arizona schools, kindergarten through 12th grade, seed-funding for STEM after-school clubs. The seed-funding is provided by JP Morgan Chase.

SFAz awarded 51 more Arizona schools this year than in 2013. Of the 118 schools throughout the state that chose to participate—90 are starting new after-school clubs, while 28 have existing clubs. Schools with existing clubs will each receive $500; schools starting new clubs will receive $700.

In July 2013, SFAz received a grant from JP Morgan Chase, which allowed the facilitation of the first Arizona STEM Club Conference and the launch of a statewide online STEM Club Guide and Network. The event attracted more than 120 educators from more than 90 schools in nine Arizona counties. Following the conference, 70 of the attending schools received seed-funding of approximately $750 to help implement and support a STEM Club. Supported with the funds, the clubs served more than 1,000 students and maintained connection through SFAz’s online network. Many of these clubs are continuing in 2014.

“We are happy to partner with JP Morgan Chase to provide much needed professional development to teachers and seed-funding to after-school STEM Clubs,” said William Harris, president and CEO of SFAz. “With the awarded grant money, schools in rural and urban communities will be able to continue or start to share the discoveries of STEM education with Arizona’s future workforce. Our goal is to prepare students to provide a significant impact to the global economy.”

In June, the second annual Arizona STEM Clubs Conference was held with great success. More than 220 educators from 150 schools representing 13 Arizona counties attended. JP Morgan Chase stepped up to provide seed funding of $500 per 28 existing clubs and $700 for 90 new clubs, funding a total of 118 schools throughout the state. SFAz expects to have 200 STEM clubs networked through its online STEM guide in the next few months.

Schools that received seed funding have agreed to hold two meetings per month and participate in the STEM Club Network which includes a yearly evaluation process. In addition, each club is required to have a minimum of five members, be active by September 15 and continue throughout the 2014-2015 academic year.

“The workforce today and that of tomorrow requires the problem solving, team work and deductive reasoning skills that are acquired through hands-on exploratory learning,” said Curtis Reed, Chase market manager for
middle market/commercial banking in Arizona. “We are pleased to partner with Science Foundation Arizona to provide seed-funding for the state’s STEM clubs.”

Public schools in counties throughout Arizona will receive the seed-funding, including schools in rural areas:

- Apache County – 4
- Cochise County – 5
- Coconino County – 1
- Gila County – 1
- Graham County – 1
- Maricopa County – 60
- Mojave County – 4
- Navajo County – 1
- Pima County – 18
- Pinal County – 6
- Yavapai County – 11
- Yuma County – 6

For a full list of the schools, please visit SFAz.org.

Based on last year’s impact, Arizona STEM Clubs have the potential to directly impact at a minimum of 2,000 and possibly 3,000 students this year. In addition, SFAz has received inquiries from educators in three other states looking to use the STEM Club model and online resources to start or expand STEM club efforts in their states.

About Science Foundation Arizona
Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2006 by the Greater Phoenix Leadership Inc., Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Flagstaff Forty in conjunction with the executive and legislative branches of state government. SFAz serves as a catalyst for high-wage, knowledge-based jobs and economic diversity through administration and strict oversight of research, development and education grants to public education and other non-profit research performing institutions. For more information, visit www.sfaz.org, or like us on Facebook.

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