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Thousands of L.A. Area Youth to Receive Free, Enriching Out-Of-School Time Programs this Summer From LA STEM Collective - a New Collaborative of Dozens of STEM Organizations

Los Angeles, CA (April 15, 2022) – In an unprecedented collaboration, more than 40 local educational organizations have come together to form the **LA STEM collective**, a new organization that will offer free programming for thousands of LA children and youth this summer and beyond, it was announced today.

The LA STEM Collective represents one of the largest mobilizations of out-of-school time (OST) learning programs in Southern California, and includes a growing list of large museums, universities and non-profits. The goal of the newly formalized organization is to optimize program delivery to the hundreds of thousands of children and youth in Los Angeles, with a focus on opening access to OST learning for all, and emphasizing providing opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) from traditionally marginalized communities.

Having worked together in an unofficial manner since Summer 2020, these organizations have already served coordinated programming to over 100,000 youth in partnership with regional school districts and community-based organizations. the **LA STEM Collective** has been able to form thanks to recent seed funding from the Eli & Edythe Broad Foundation, the Adams Legacy Foundation, and the National League of Cities.

“The peer support from participating in the [LA STEM Collective] has led to increased collaboration with fellow STEM providers and meeting broader communities of young learners which had been particularly valuable during these past couple of challenging years,” reports Laurel Robinson, Director of Programs of the Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County.

This new organization will serve as the “hub” of the Los Angeles regional STEM Ecosystem, pulling together providers of OST learning, aka Expanded Learning, as well as other stakeholders including industry leaders, civic groups, school districts, after-school program providers and community-based organizations. Standing as a centralized intermediary organization, the new entity will coordinate communication, programming, funding, promotion and training across member organizations.

“The STEM Learning Ecosystems have changed communities and the lives of Americans. We’ve done this by good old-fashioned hard work, by collaboration and by recognizing that STEM is the way to solve our nation’s grandest of challenges,” said Jan Morrison, founder and

chief executive officer of TIES the backbone organization for the national STEM Learning Ecosystems. With the new LA STEM Collective, Los Angeles can now count itself as part of this national network.

The LA STEM Collective also will facilitate and streamline funding opportunities for large-scale initiatives, working across the region and providing a platform for smaller organizations to access funds and incubating emerging organizations. “Being part of [the Collective] has helped us not only learn from other mission-aligned organizations to create more engaging experiences, but also provided us with the opportunity to deliver programming to communities that we’ve never worked with before, amplifying our impact,” said Kay Yang of member organization Tinker the Robot about how participation in the LA STEM Collective has helped them build operational capacity.

This summer, the LA STEM Collective will focus on serving youth in LA County who are still recovering from the pandemic-related disruptions of their school and home lives. The LA STEM Collective will leverage its established relationships with LAUSD and dozens of community-based organizations to provide experiences that center social-emotional learning and identity development along with STEM skills and subjects. Member organizations stand ready to connect LA’s young people to rare artifacts, working professionals and compelling learning through field trips and outreach programming wherever the students are this summer.

Before becoming the LA STEM Collective, the group coordinated programming in response to COVID-related disruptions in the education of LA’s students. Since 2020, members of the Collective have continuously provided free, live online and in-person programs to LAUSD and community-based organizations, including in-class and after-school programs, enrichment courses, field trips, and access to resources for teachers. As a sign of its success, LAUSD recently contracted the Collective to provide after school enrichment programming through Summer 2023.

“The program our girls had with the Natural History Museums Performing Arts team was not one they have every day-- it was educational, intimate, and interactive. The intimacy of the program allowed them to connect even more to the content and we saw that by the number of questions they asked during the program-- they were engaged the whole time,” said Monica Garcia, Director of Programs at Girasoles en Marcha (GEM) who received a program in 2021.

Start-up funds are enabling the Collective to hire support staff, define its operations, and engage in long-term planning. The Collective has engaged DoGoodery, a consulting agency, to help launch the organization with strategic planning and branding.

Membership in the LA STEM Collective is growing every day. Current organizations have a significant impact on the life of Greater Los Angeles. They represent nearly \$200 million in operations with over 2000 employees and annual visitorship of over 6 million. The LA STEM Collective is growing out of the work of several network-building initiatives in Southern California, all with significant overlap in membership and goals. The new organization merges the existing SoCal ISE group and the LA STEM Hub formerly led by the LA Chamber of Commerce and now led by the USC Viterbi K-12 STEM Center.

The LA STEM Collective is hosted by The Wildwoods Foundation, a project of Community Partners, a 501c3 public benefit organization. Information is at www.lastemcollective.org

CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE LA STEM COLLECTIVE

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| 5 Gyres Institute | Move the World |
| AltaSea | National Marine Mammal Foundation |
| Aquarium of the Pacific | National Park Service |
| BEAM.ORG | Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County |
| Cabrillo Marine Aquarium | Oceanographic Teaching Stations, Inc. (Roundhouse Aquarium) |
| California Science Center | Pacific Marine Mammal Center |
| Columbia Memorial Space Center | Pacific Battleship Center (Battleship Iowa) |
| Debs Park - Audubon | PS Science |
| Descanso Gardens | Resource Conservation District of Santa Monica Mountains (RCDSMM) |
| Discovery Cube Los Angeles | Straight A |
| Emerald Bay Outdoor Academy | TreePeople |
| Flavor of Aqua | TecnoLatinx |
| Friends of LA River (FOLAR) | Tinker the Robot |
| Girls IN Focus | TxT (Teens Exploring Technology) |
| Heal the Bay Aquarium | USC Viterbi K-12 STEM Center |
| Kidspace Children's Museum | USC Wrigley Institute/Sea Grant |
| LA Audubon/Nature Nexus Institute | Walter Munk Foundation for the Oceans |
| LA Conservation Corps | Wildwoods Foundation |
| LA County Sanitation | Waterfront Education |
| LA Zoo | |
| LAMI (Los Angeles Maritime Institute) | |
| Madrona Marsh | |
| Marine Mammal Care Center | |
| Mountain and Sea Education | |

What is Out-of-School Time / Expanded Learning?

Most children and youth spend most of their time out of the classroom including after school hours and on weekends. Out-of-School Time (OST), or Expanded Learning, represents all of the educational opportunities that are available during these times, including with museums, after-school programs, camps, community-based organizations, and clubs - anywhere learning happens outside of the traditional school day. Research has shown that OST experiences have a lead role in shaping the career choices of youth later in life as well as excelling at providing social emotional learning experiences. The LA STEM Collective acknowledges the fundamental role that expanded learning has in the lives of children and will work to improve the quality of OST programs while opening access to them for more youth in Greater Los Angeles.

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