



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact:**

Kim Case

908.875.7167 or [kcase@rdnj.org](mailto:kcase@rdnj.org)

## **February I CAN STEM New Jersey Role Model Announced**

Chatham, N.J. (February 23, 2021) The New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (“NJSPN”) is excited to announce its February I CAN STEM New Jersey STEM Role Model, Naseed Gifted.

Naseed Gifted is an educator, engineer, and writer for sci-fi comic book series P.B. Soldier from Newark, New Jersey. Something that was once his childhood hobby has spring-boarded into a passion to change the face of comics. He is dedicated to inspiring young people to be science and technology leaders who excel academically, succeed professionally and positively in the community. A New Jersey native, and New Jersey Institute of Technology, St. Peter’s University and New York University graduate, Gifted is also the founder of Newark’s Comic Book Festival and Animation Film Festival “Khem Comic Fest and Khem Animation Film Festival.” He is also a two-time Glyph Comic Awards, Urban Action Showcase, Urban Action Showcase nominee and 2020 Pioneer/LifeTime Achievement Award recipient, an engineer and writer, who regularly travels across the country speaking about diversity and using comics to teach S.T.E.M.





Published works include self-published sci-fi comic book series: P.B. Soldier “The Awakening” & Jazen “The Rose that grew from the Concrete”; Short stories: Occupy Renaissance City and Terrorist Act of 2011; and Director/Writer: “The Awakening” Short Film and P.B. Soldier Animated Short.

Presently, Naseed Gifted is the principal of Malcolm X High School in Newark, N.J.

Through I CAN STEM, the NJSPN aims to increase the diversity of New Jersey’s STEM workforce and academic pipelines. I CAN STEM will highlight diverse STEM role models so that all students will be able to see themselves participating and succeeding in STEM courses and careers. Each year, 12 I CAN STEM New Jersey Role Models will be highlighted, one each month.

NJSPN features both historical and famous I CAN STEM Role Models, such as physicist Shirley Ann Jackson, mathematician Alberto Calderón, and molecular biologist Flossie Wong-Staal, as well as I CAN STEM New Jersey Role Models representing people of color, LGBTQ+ community members and women who work in a STEM field here in New Jersey.

The I CAN STEM New Jersey Role Models were identified through an online nomination process. Nominations for 2021 are closed and nominations for 2022 will be open in September. Anyone can submit a nomination that meets the diversity criteria and works in New Jersey in a STEM field. The nomination form will be available at [njstempathways.org](http://njstempathways.org).





For more information on I CAN STEM visit <https://njstempathways.org/i-can-stem/>.

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The NJSPN was created in 2014 and is managed by the Research & Development Council for New Jersey. It includes over 500 STEM leaders from across the State and connects all STEM stakeholders-K-12, higher education, non-profit, informal providers, business, philanthropists and government. NJSPN has six STEM learning ecosystems as part of an international network of ecosystems supported by the STEM Funders' Network. You can learn more about the Jersey STEM Pathways Network and New Jersey's STEM Ecosystems by visiting [www.njstempathways.org](http://www.njstempathways.org).