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Jersey Shore STEM Ecosystem Successfully Launched at AT&T Labs

Chatham, NJ - August 13, 2024 – The Jersey Shore STEM Ecosystem (JSSE) officially launched with a successful kickoff event held at the AT&T Labs in Middletown, NJ. The event brought together a diverse group of 100 educators, business leaders, and community organizations to enhance STEM education across the Jersey Shore, ensuring equitable access for all students.

JSSE is a collaborative effort led by Toms River Regional Schools in Ocean County and Manalapan High School, Freehold Regional High School District in Monmouth County. This initiative is part of the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN), which now oversees a total of eight STEM learning ecosystems representing twenty-one counties within the state of New Jersey. These ecosystems connect STEM stakeholders at a regional level, develop new initiatives to support the education-to-workforce pipeline, and engage in a national community of practice of over 100 STEM Learning Ecosystems around the world.

Speakers from Toms River Regional Schools, Manalapan High School, and AT&T Labs highlighted the importance of collaboration in fostering STEM education. Interactive sessions provided attendees with hands-on experiences and showcased innovative STEM programs and partnerships. The event also offered valuable networking opportunities for educators, business leaders, and community members to connect and discuss future collaborations. Full agenda can be viewed [here](#) and the presentation can be viewed [here](#).

“Today’s event marks a significant milestone in our efforts to enhance STEM education in the Jersey Shore region,” said Christine Girtain, Toms River High School North & Toms River High School South Director of Authentic Research and JSSE Co-lead. “By bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, we are laying the foundation for a stronger, more equitable STEM education system that will benefit all students.”

Attendees expressed enthusiasm about the potential impact of JSSE. “The kickoff event was a fantastic opportunity to connect with other STEM advocates and explore ways we can work together to support students and educators,” said Jelena Komitas, Manalapan High School, Freehold Regional High School District Supervisor of Mathematics, Science and Science & Engineering Program and JSSE Co-lead. “We are excited to see the positive changes this ecosystem will bring to our community.”



JSSE will continue to build on the momentum of the kickoff event by investing time and funding in initiatives and partnerships to support STEM education and career pathways. Future events and programs will be announced in the coming months.

“New Jersey’s first STEM Learning Ecosystems were launched in 2016; since then we have doubled in size, from four to eight ecosystems!” said Kim Case, Executive Director of the Research & Development Council of New Jersey and Manager of the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network, which supports the New Jersey ecosystems. “We know this model works for learners and we are going to continue to support our ecosystems so we can have an even greater impact in STEM.”

For more information about the Jersey Shore STEM Ecosystem, please contact Christine Girtain at NJSTOY2023@gmail.com or Jelena Komitas at jkomitas@frhsd.com.

Event photos can be found [here](#) and Jersey Shore STEM Ecosystem logos can be found [here](#).

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About the Jersey Shore STEM Ecosystem:

The Jersey Shore STEM Ecosystem is a collaborative initiative led by Toms River Regional Schools and Manalapan High School. It is part of the NJSPN's network of STEM learning ecosystems that work to connect STEM stakeholders, develop new initiatives, and support the education-to-workforce pipeline in New Jersey.

About the NJSPN:

The NJSPN was created in 2014 and is managed by the Research & Development Council for New Jersey. It includes over 700 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 eight STEM learning ecosystems as part of an international network of ecosystems supported by the STEM Funders' Network. You can learn more about the NJSPN, New Jersey's STEM Ecosystems, and NJ STEM Month by visiting www.njstempathways.org.