FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Shirley Mautone
smautone@rdnj.org

2024 NJ STEM Month Award Honorees Recognized at Duke Farms

Chatham, N.J. The New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN) celebrated this year's NJ STEM Month award honorees at Duke Farms during their quarterly meeting on June 5, 2024. This highly anticipated event featured presentations from each honoree, showcasing the remarkable STEM work that earned them their awards.

NJ STEM Month, held annually in March, is co-hosted by the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network and the Research & Development Council of New Jersey. It highlights the Garden State's incredible accomplishments in science, technology, engineering, math, and innovation. This year, NJ STEM Month surpassed its goal, impacting over 71,000 learners, including participation from NJ Makers Day.

The NJ STEM Month Awards recognize outstanding leadership, collaboration, and achievement in STEM across New Jersey. These awards are open to all stakeholders responsible for learning, achievement, and innovation, including schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, philanthropies, science centers, museums, and faith-based organizations.

The 2024 NJ STEM Month Award Winners are:

STEM Advocate of the Year: Makeba Green, International Girls Academy

Celebrating a true spokesperson for STEM in New Jersey, this honor highlights an organization or individual who most effectively communicates the importance of STEM to New Jersey and its citizens. Makeba Green received this award for her dedication to increasing access to STEM education and career pathways through a variety of programs and events offered by the International Girls Academy.

STEM Civic Leadership Award: New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP)

This award is provided to those who have sought to improve and enhance the quality of STEM in their community through initiatives that include volunteerism, mentorship, and/or training.

NJMEP was recognized for this honor for their Future Makers and Creators Tours that provide students the opportunity to learn about and experience modern manufacturing firsthand.

STEM Collaboration of the Year: Federal Aviation Administration William J Hughes Technical Center (FAAWJHTC) Aviation STEM Program, FAAWJHTC Airport Technology Branch, Naval Air Station Wildwood Museum and Cape May Airport

This award celebrates the individuals and/or organizations moving beyond silos to create a more connected New Jersey. The STEM Collaborator develops partnerships and combines resources to provide outstanding STEM programming and establish clear career pathways in their community and beyond. To qualify, submissions must exhibit collaborations between three or more individuals or organizations.

This year's STEM Collaboration honorees collaborated on a Student Day at the Naval Air Station Wildwood Museum where students were able to learn about Cape May county's aviation history and the future of aviation.

STEM Corporate Champion of the Year: Puratos
An honor highlighting an organization that has demonstrated a deep commitment to supporting New Jersey's STEM economy. From sponsoring a baking school at the Pennsauken School district (part of the South Jersey STEM Ecosystem) to promote the students career interests and build a talent pipeline to hosting lectures on the science of food, Puratos has been an integral part of all that this award encompasses.

STEM Educator of the Year: Christopher Kunkel, Hoboken Charter School

Awarded to an individual or organization that has dedicated their time and energy to successfully improving STEM learning outcomes for students in New Jersey. From mentoring several FIRST LEGO League and FIRST Tech Challenge teams to running summer STEM programs, Christopher has made an incredible impact on so many students and truly deserves this acknowledgement.

For more information on NJ STEM Month, visit www.njstempathways.org/njstemmonth.

***

The NJSPN was created in 2014 and is managed by the Research & Development Council of 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. The 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 New Jersey STEM Pathways Network and New Jersey's STEM Ecosystems by visiting www.njstempathways.org.