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New Jersey STEM Strategic Advisory Board Announces 2025 Innovation Fund Grant Recipients

Chatham, NJ – The New Jersey STEM Strategic Advisory Board (NJSSAB) is proud to announce the recipients of the 2025 Innovation Fund grants, following a highly competitive selection process and a significant increase in statewide interest.

This year, NJSSAB received 36 applications requesting a total of $649,039 in funding, with submissions representing 17 of New Jersey's 21 counties.

"The Innovation Fund continues to showcase the power of collaboration in advancing STEM education across New Jersey," said Maria Spina, NJSSAB Chair and Manager of the PSEG Foundation. "These grants are not only helping students access hands-on, real-world learning opportunities—they're also building stronger, more connected communities committed to preparing the next generation of innovators."

After careful review, NJSSAB selected four outstanding grantees to receive a total of $79,963 in funding. Applications were evaluated based on several key criteria, including innovation, organizational capacity, potential for additional funding or programming, number of learners impacted, focus on underserved populations and Title I schools, and geographic reach.

The Innovation Fund grants are designed to spark transformative STEM learning experiences by connecting students and educators with real-world applications in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The 2025 Innovation Fund Grant Recipients are:

- **Cinnaminson School District** – *South Region (Burlington County)*
- **Paterson School District** – *North Region (Passaic County)*
- **Hillside School District** – *Central Region (Union County)*
- **NY/NJ Baykeeper** – *Central & North Regions (Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Union, Middlesex, Monmouth Counties)*

Awardee Highlights:

- **Cinnaminson School District** will expand New Albany Elementary School's STEM programming by creating a makerspace that encourages student creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning tied to classroom concepts.

- **Paterson School District** will launch *Next Stop: MARS*, a STEM exploration initiative that leverages NASA-aligned content and planetarium programming to deepen student interest in space and engage families.
- **Hillside School District** will build on its existing STEM efforts with the *Create, Skate, Innovate* project, which enhances partnerships and creates a sustainable model to increase student participation in experiential STEM learning.
- **NY/NJ Baykeeper** will expand its *Urban Environmental STEM & Stewardship Initiative*, offering students immersive, real-world experiences in environmental research and community-based science, preparing them to be future STEM and sustainability leaders.

NJSSAB will continue its commitment to supporting innovative STEM initiatives through the Innovation Fund, with the next round of grant applications anticipated to open in winter 2025.

NJSSAB is currently welcoming new members from the business and philanthropic sectors. Members must commit to an annual $20,000 investment and participate as voting board members, attending tri-annual meetings. For those interested in supporting STEM education but not joining the Board, donations to the Innovation Fund are also welcomed. For more information, please contact Kim Case at **kcase@rdnj.org**.

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*The **New Jersey STEM Strategic Advisory Board (NJSSAB)** is part of the **New Jersey STEM Pathways Network (NJSPN)**. Established in 2019, NJSSAB brings together business and philanthropic leaders to improve the return on investment in STEM education by streamlining charitable funding through the Innovation Fund. Current members include Comcast, Novartis, the PSEG Foundation, the Overdeck Family Foundation, and Sanofi. NJSSAB leads statewide efforts in partnership with NJSPN, which is managed by the Research & Development Council of New Jersey. Learn more about NJSPN, New Jersey's STEM Ecosystems, and NJ STEM Month at **www.njstempathways.org**.*

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