National Youth Commission Advocating for STEM Public Policy in Washington, DC

HOUSTON – September 8, 2016 – The National C-STEM Youth Commission is traveling to Washington, DC September 14-18 to advocate for STEM Public Policy that impacts minority and female engagement in high quality STEM programs during/after-school. The C-STEM Youth Commission was formed ten months ago and consists of a group of (10) high school students from Houston, Texas and Detroit, Michigan. The Youth Commissioners have been invited to brief The White House on their STEM white paper, “The Case for Implementing a Common Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Definition to Improve Upon Access to High-Quality Enrichment Programs for Minorities and Females”.

While in Washington, DC, the Youth Commissioners will attend Congressional Black Caucus Foundations Annual Legislative Conference where they will participate in Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson’s STEM Brain Trust, “The STEM Melting Pot: Addressing the Importance of Diversity”. Funding to support the Youth Commissioner’s STEM Public Policy Advocacy work is from a State Farm Youth Advisory Board Grant, Women’s Energy Network Houston, and Education Consulting Services, LLC.

STEM roles are growing twice the rate of all other jobs. According to Duke Fuqua School of Business (2016), there are currently 97 defined STEM occupations. Current economic forecasts, projects, that there will be 8.5 million NEW STEM jobs by 2020, however, there is no guarantee the talent will be available domestically to fill those jobs. Currently, only 40% of students who enter college intending to major in a STEM field complete a STEM degree within five years. Women now represent the largest percent of college graduates, however, less than 22% choose to pursue degrees in a STEM field. Further, 60% of job openings now require basic STEM literacy, and 42% require advanced STEM skills. “The largest deficit in filling STEM job openings is the untapped potential and knowledge of minorities and females,” said Dr. Flowers.

Houston area State Farm Agent Tiffany Jones presented C-STEM Youth Commission with the $86,000 Youth Advisory Board grant that launch the program in 2015. Jones said the funds help the organization reach its goals to positively impact local youth; “The C-STEM Youth Commission project helps students gain a better understanding of STEM-focused education and pursue STEM-related careers. We’re proud to continue our support of those efforts through a State Farm Youth Advisory Board grant.”

“I am excited about the STEM public policy advocacy work being led by students on behalf of students. These are high school students who are currently experiencing STEM opportunities being offered at their schools and in their communities. Who better than they to share and advocate for improvements in STEM education on behalf of youth nationally. The Youth Commissioners are very passionate about their work and I am looking forward to seeing them in action in Washington,” said Dr. Reagan Flowers, Founder and CEO of C-STEM.

Communication, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (C-STEM) is a Houston based education nonprofit 501(c)(3) that provides hands-on, STEM-focused learning opportunities to underserved and socio-economically disadvantaged students in grades Pre-K through 12, professional training in STEM education, and internships for college/university students.

For more information on C-STEM, email us at info@cstem.org

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Founded in 2002, C-STEM Teacher and Student Support Services, Inc. has impacted more than 200,000 Pre K-12th grade students nationally. The organization is dedicated to developing STEM talent pipelines, bolstering self-confidence, and fostering a well-rounded mastery of the areas of communication, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. C-STEM is closing the STEM academic achievement gap for students and the STEM skills development gap of teachers. For additional information, visit www.cstem.org.
Notes to Editors, Producers, Reporters and Social Media Curators:

1. C-STEM Youth Commissioners - Photo Link
   https://www.dropbox.com/home/CSTEM%20Youth%20Commission%20Retreat

2. Click to access a list of the schools the students attend

About C-STEM Teacher and Student Support Services

During and after school, C-STEM provides students with rigorous and relevant learning opportunities in communication, science, technology, engineering, and math (CSTEM) to help students develop their critical thinking skills, self-esteem, and intrinsic motivation to learn. The organization's community impact allows companies, organizations, and universities who create the jobs and knowledge necessary for economic growth to benefit from C-STEM students' skills, talent, ideas, and creativity. For additional information, visit www.cstem.org.