Fort Worth ISD Expands STEM Curriculum Through Million Dollar Investment From Lockheed Martin

Grant will expand college and career-focused programs aimed to better prepare students with vital 21st century skills

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FORT WORTH, Texas, Sept. 23, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Fort Worth Independent School District and Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) announced a $1 million multi-year grant to expand college- and career-focused science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs for all district schools.

The STEM curriculum is offered through Project Lead The Way (PLTW), the nation's leading provider of K-12 STEM programs. With its activity based curricula, PLTW provides a transformative learning environment where students learn problem-solving strategies, critical and creative thinking, and how to communicate and collaborate. PLTW empowers students to develop in-demand knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in an evolving world. Nurturing an interest in STEM is vital to addressing the nation's critical need for future engineers, computer scientists and math- and science-trained professionals, and to equip all students with the skills for their future success

Fort Worth ISD is the third urban school district to expand STEM programming through Lockheed Martin's national agreement with PLTW. Through the grant, six new schools will begin offering PLTW programs for the 2015-16 school year. Over the course of the grant, with matching support from other community partners, every Fort Worth ISD elementary, middle and high school from across the district will have the opportunity to implement a PLTW program of study.

"In a year in which 'Building Relationships' is our District theme, one of the most valued relationships we have is with Lockheed Martin," said Interim Superintendent Dr. Patricia Linares. "We are so grateful for their support and for the example they set in our community through Project Lead The Way. They and we will work together to make students successful and ensure the future of Fort Worth."

Lockheed Martin has committed $6 million nationally to expand PLTW programs in select U.S. urban school districts. In addition to Fort Worth, Lockheed Martin has similar partnerships withOrange County, Florida, Huntsville, Alabama and Washington, D.C. The grant funding covers implementation costs, including PLTW teacher professional development training, software, classroom equipment and supplies. In addition, Lockheed Martin engineers will volunteer in classrooms at the participating schools, building relationships with students as role models and mentors.

"This partnership gives our talented workforce the opportunity to share the excitement of STEM directly with the students and provide another connection between the classroom and real-world application," said Orlando Carvalho, executive vice president, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. "This is another aspect of our commitment to our Fort Worth community, where Lockheed Martin and its predecessor companies have had a presence for more than 70 years."

Expanding student access to STEM education is an issue of national prosperity and security. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports that, by 2018, STEM-related jobs in the U.S. will grow by 17 percent, nearly double the rate of jobs in non-STEM fields. The Department estimates 1.2 million unfilled STEM jobs by 2018, due to a lack of qualified, trained workers. Expanding access to STEM education for underrepresented minority students is also of great interest; only 10 percent of U.S. scientists and engineers come from underrepresented minority groups.

"The partnership between Lockheed Martin and Fort Worth ISD, using PLTW's programs, is a model for how public and private partnerships can help solve the education and workforce development challenges facing our nation," said PLTW President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Vince Bertram. "We are grateful for Lockheed Martin's leadership and the opportunities they are creating for students in Fort Worth and other urban areas."

About Lockheed Martin:
Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 112,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's net sales for 2014 were $45.6 billion.

About Fort Worth ISD:
With over 86,000 students in 83 elementary schools, 29 middle schools and 6th grade centers, 19 high schools and 13 other campuses, Fort Worth ISD enjoys a diverse student population and strong community partnerships. Under the leadership of the superintendent and the Board of Education, the District is undergoing a series of initiatives that will redesign, transform, and revitalize Fort Worth ISD Schools.

About Project Lead The Way:
Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is a nonprofit organization that provides a transformative learning experience for K-12 students and teachers across the U.S. Through pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science, K-12 students learn problem-solving strategies, critical and creative thinking, and how to communicate and collaborate. PLTW empowers students to develop in-demand knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in an evolving world. More than 8,000 elementary, middle, and high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia offer PLTW programs. For more information, visit www.pltw.org.

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