Motorola Foundation Grants $5 Million to Programs That Engage Budding Innovators

SCHAUMBURG, Ill., /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The Motorola Foundation today announced the recipients of its 2009 Innovation Generation grants, $5 million in funding to promote science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education for America's youth.

Now in its fourth year, the grants create opportunities for students to experience STEM both inside and outside the classroom, equipping them with the skills essential to their lives today and to their success in the future.

"Science and technology come to life every day at Motorola. With Innovation Generation, we extend that experience to students across the country, so they will be inspired and prepared to embrace - or even create - the inventions of the future," said Eileen Sweeney, director of the Motorola Foundation.

"We support programs that make science, math and engineering compelling - whether that is with real-world role models, exciting out-of-school programming or experiences that are completely out of the box."

Different points of view are essential to innovation. Through Innovation Generation, the Motorola Foundation aims to reach untapped minds and increase opportunities among diverse populations to support the continuum of invention that will power the future. Among this year's grantees:

The National Society of Black Engineers' Summer Engineering Experience for Kids (SEEK) in Alexandria, Va., engages hundreds of students across the country in grades 3-8 in team-based, interactive engineering projects. SEEK camps enable students to participate in hands-on projects designed to increase their aptitude in math and science and spark their interest in pursuing careers in STEM fields.

Latinitas' Smart Chicas in Austin, Texas, hosts a series of bilingual workshops at 25 area schools that encourage Hispanic girls in grades 6-8 to consider careers in STEM fields. The workshops introduce them to college student mentors and professional role models, connecting the value of math and science to the real world and promoting classroom achievement.

"This year, we're proud to add 43 brand-new programs to the Innovation Generation network, including some that might not have been possible without our support," Sweeney adds. "We value the fresh approaches these programs are using to inspire today's students to become tomorrow's innovators."

The Innovation Generation grants are an integral part of the Motorola Foundation's Innovation Generation program, which emphasizes much more than financial

support. It encourages Motorola employee engagement with students and grantees, supports research that furthers understanding of effective practices in STEM education and builds sustaining networks among grantees.

In July, the Motorola Foundation will convene leaders in STEM education and Innovation Generation grantees for its first-ever Innovation Generation Conference. Attendees will explore best practices in collaborative learning sessions that address teaching innovation and entrepreneurship as well as pre-engineer, out-of-school, girl-centric and sustainability programming.

By sharing best practices and convening a community dedicated to engaging students in STEM education, the Motorola Foundation is helping to build capacity for these organizations.

The Motorola Foundation focuses its funding on education, especially science, technology, engineering and math programming. For more information, on Motorola Corporate and Foundation giving, visit www.motorola.com/giving.

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