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Day of Design™: STEMconnector® Launches new Design Thinking Initiative
Join the Movement

Washington, DC (May 15, 2017) - Today, STEMconnector® launches its new Day of Design™ (DofD) initiative, recurring annually on National Manufacturing Day; October 6, 2017. Currently, 2.8 million students and counting in all 50 states will participate in a design thinking challenge that will provide them with the skills they need to prepare for the workforce of tomorrow. By introducing millions of students to design thinking, this effort will encourage thousands of young men and women to pursue careers related to STEM and place them right in the center of the manufacturing revolution taking place in the US and around the world.

“We are proud to salute a coordinated effort between STEMconnector, the Day of Design and the National Association of Manufacturers to enhance opportunities for students across the country,” Edie Fraser, CEO of STEMconnector® said, “ We are so excited to be working with NAM to connect the manufacturers to schools and increase the students’ interest in advanced manufacturing. Design thinking is so important to fill the job gap and we are so excited to be a part of this change. We firmly believe that Day of Design™ will be the vehicle to impact change in the way we educate and lead to jobs.”

"Today's manufacturing jobs require a highly-skilled workforce, and connecting manufacturers with students and teachers is essential for building the talent pipeline needed for the industry to continue to grow," said NAM Chief of Staff Keith Smith. "We appreciate the educational resources STEMconnector is providing during MFG DAY so more students can learn about and choose careers in manufacturing."

This initiative was created by a unique group of leaders from education and business, including Stratasys, JASON Learning, The Clearing, Dassault Systèmes, The University of Iowa, Gateway Technical College, Olin College of Engineering, Base 11, Safe Harbor Consulting, Learning Blade, Jobs for America’s Graduates, National Science Foundation, EC-Council and Next Step Universe. Dave Benoit, the Director of Global Education and Business Development at Stratasys, observed;

“Advanced Manufacturing jobs are some of the fastest growing with thousands of openings that are currently going unfilled due to a shortage in qualified candidates. Day of Design™ will prepare our future workforce by giving them the problem-solving skills needed to fill these jobs. “

Design thinking is a revolutionary problem solving methodology intended to generate innovative solutions for complex problems through empathizing, defining, ideating, prototyping, and testing. Companies utilizing this approach include industry leaders such as Ideo, Ford, Capital One, SAP, and Deloitte among others. The skills learned from design thinking will help close the talent gap needed to fill the thousands of pre-existing jobs in STEM fields. Participation from a wide range of sectors and constituents is highly desirable for success.

The critical student outreach component of the project is being led by JASON Learning, a non-profit, exploration-based program that reaches 3.5 million students globally. Dr. Eleanor Smalley, CEO and President of JASON Learning said, “ We are so excited to work in collaboration with Day of Design™ and the opportunity to get students into facilities where they can see the latest and greatest innovations in American industry.”

Day of Design™ challenges will require students to use design thinking and follow a specific set of steps. They submit a video that explains their process of solving the problem as well as how they arrived at their solution. Upon completion of this challenge, participants will receive a virtual badge that can be used on social media platforms, which will also link to their video report on the challenge. How do I participate? Make a pledge, receive a packet and then go online to select a challenge or create my own, launch the effort on or before the Day of Design (participate in free training webinar offered in Aug/Sept), have students create videos explaining their solution and submit to DofD team. Then, join us in November to hear about the amazing results and impact of your efforts.

STEMconnector® is working in partnership with Credly to provide accreditation to participants of Day of Design™. Credly is an open source platform for people to earn and showcase their achievements and badges. As select badges are earned and issued by Credly, via www.dayofdesign.com, participants can easily share them on social media, Mozilla Backpack, a personal website, their Credly profile and more.

Day of Design™ utilizes social media to impact students, teachers and sponsors as they engage in our challenges. Continuous updates will be provided on Facebook: /DayofDesign11 Twitter: @Day_of_Design and Instagram: @day_of_design.

About STEMconnector®

STEMconnector® is a consortium of companies, associations, societies, policy organizations, government entities, universities and academic institutions concerned with STEM education and the future of human capital and jobs. With seven unique initiatives and services, STEMconnector® is both a resource and a service, designed to link “all things STEM.” STEMconnector’s network includes

organizations at the global, national, state and local levels. STEMconnector® focuses on the STEM workforce and jobs, with a particular emphasis on diversity and women. Our work spans the entire pipeline (Kindergarten to Jobs) and how STEM education experiences translate into careers. To learn more, visit <http://www.STEMconnector.org>

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