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MICHIGAN SCIENCE CENTER AWARDED OVER \$200K GRANT AS PART OF RALPH C. WILSON, JR. FOUNDATION *STEM 2035* COHORT INITIATIVE

\$5.5 million initiative aims to create STEM pathways for girls and children of color in sixth through 12th grades

Detroit, September 12, 2018 – The [Michigan Science Center](#) (MiSci) has been named one of 17 organizations selected to participate in the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation cohort for [STEM 2035](#), a \$5.5 million initiative through which grant funding and technical assistance will be provided to existing afterschool and summer STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programs in Western New York and Southeast Michigan.

[Community Connections of NY](#) (CCNY), a nonprofit management services organization, is overseeing the *STEM 2035* initiative for the Foundation. CCNY has awarded grants to MiSci and 16 other organizations, each for up to \$250,000 over a three-year span. Grantees were selected based on a variety of factors, including their focus on middle and high school girls and underrepresented groups in the STEM fields and innovative approaches to program expansion or new programming. The Michigan Science Center will use the funding to support its successful STEMinista Project, which targets 4th – 8th grade girls with exciting STEM experiences and role models.

“As the creator of The [STEMinista Project](#), we work with a robust collaborative of partners to keep girls engaged with STEM during a period when they typically start to lose interest,” said Cassie Byrd, chief learning officer at the Michigan Science Center. “We are honored to be included in the *STEM 2035* cohort, which will help us to improve collaboration and learning among partners, role models and youth involved in The STEMinista Project.”

In addition to funding, grantees will also participate in the *STEM 2035* peer learning community. Through this group, they will receive training and technical assistance, try new evaluation tools and quality improvement strategies, collaborate, and learn together. The [PEAR Institute at Harvard](#), a subject matter expert in afterschool STEM programs, will provide technical assistance, program assessments, and support for grantees in the *STEM 2035* cohort.

More information about *STEM 2035* can be found by visiting comconnectionsny.com/STEM.

About the Michigan Science Center

The Michigan Science Center (MiSci) inspires nearly 300,000 curious minds of all ages every year through STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) discovery, innovation and interactive education in Detroit and across the state of Michigan. As the STEM hub of the state, MiSci focuses on developing and introducing expanded education programs, exhibits, and initiatives that empower and enrich all children and all communities with STEM. Through our Traveling Science Program and distance learning initiative, ECHO, we are expanding beyond our Detroit-based facility, with a goal of reaching all 83 counties of Michigan. With the Toyota Engineering 4D Theater, live stage shows, a Planetarium, lab activities, 250+ hands-on exhibits, and more, there are dozens of ways to



customize your MiSci visit. The Michigan Science Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and does not receive support from the city of Detroit or the state of Michigan. For more information, please call 313.577.8400 or visit the website, Mi-Sci.org.

About the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a grantmaking organization dedicated primarily to sustained investment in the quality of life of the people of Southeast Michigan and Western New York. The two areas reflect Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.'s devotion to his hometown of Detroit and greater Buffalo, home of his Buffalo Bills franchise. Prior to his passing in 2014, Mr. Wilson requested that a significant share of his estate be used to continue a life-long generosity of spirit by funding the Foundation that bears his name. The Foundation has a grantmaking capacity of \$1.2 billion over a 20-year period, which expires January 8, 2035. This structure is consistent with Mr. Wilson's desire for the Foundation's impact to be immediate, substantial, measurable and overseen by those who knew him best. For more information visit www.rcwjrf.org.

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