

# News Release

For Immediate Release

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## **NEW STEM CAREER EXPLORATION LAB OPENS INSIDE CLAREVIEW RECREATION CENTRE TO GIVE MARGINALIZED YOUTH A CHANCE TO BUILD STEM SKILLS, CONNECT WITH INDUSTRY, BUILD JOB SKILLS AND IMPROVE POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS**

**Edmonton** - What better way to get marginalized youth interested in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, than building a STEM careers incubator in the very building where they like to hang out after school.

That's the strategy behind the brand new STEM Career Exploration Lab (STEMCEL) inside the C5 family network hub at the Edmonton Clareview Recreation Centre.

STEMCEL is a career skills incubator designed to increase students' motivations and capacities to pursue careers in fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics by engaging them in minds-on and hands-on field experience, laboratory/project-based learning, entrepreneurship tasks and mentorship experiences.

It is a safe space for youth aged 12 - 24, to job-shadow and engage in 21st century skills development and experiential learning, while being mentored by STEM industry professionals. This will expose students to a world of possibilities and enhance their ability to make informed decisions about education and start building their career paths early.

**Edmonton media are invited to come see and experience the STEMCEL for themselves Tuesday, May 31 from 10:00 - 11:00 am. We will have students from Cardinal Collins High School Academy working in the lab and available for interviews.**

**Other interviews available include:** Funke Smith, Founder and CEO of Skillcity Institute and the creator of the STEMCEL, Mohamed Elsaghir, Director of the C5 Northeast Hub, David Schmaus, NAIT instructor, Bachelor of Technology of the JR Shaw School of Business, and Jasmine Blake, ECD/Parent Education Facilitator, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, C5 Family Resource Network- Earthwalk Team

There is a STEM talent crisis in our country that is fueled by the underrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities in these future-shaping disciplines. STEM industries are the backbone of the economy. So if fewer and fewer young people pursue or persist in these critical fields, who is going to build the future?

“STEMCEL is designed to peak interest in youth early, get them interested and help shape their educational choices to ensure greater success when choosing to enter these fields through post-secondary education and career mentorship. For example, many youth need Math 10, 20, 30 to enter these areas of study in University. We want to ensure we catch them young in highschool and give them the tailored support and guidance they need to pursue the lucrative careers in the world of STEM,” says Funke Smith, CEO and Founder of Skillcity Institute and

the STEMCEL. We have partnered with numerous industry professionals who see the value in ensuring we can meet the demands of their industry with trained professionals from marginalized groups who otherwise may not have chosen the field or been provided the opportunity. They are prepared to be in the STEMCEL to help mentor and inspire our youth.”

STEMCEL is provided free of charge to youth so that youth from under-resourced communities can have equal access to the same launchpad for economic development, as their more privileged peers.

STEMCEL is also powered with Virtual Reality, so while it is strategically located within the C5 family resource network at the Edmonton Clareview Recreation Centre; STEMCEL Virtual Reality career exploration experiences can be delivered in other locations as we partner with schools and youth-serving community agencies.

STEMCEL has been created by SkillCity Institute, in partnership with the C5 Family Resource Network, the Edmonton Community Foundation, United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, the Government of Canada.

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