

LEMELSON N-MIT

Celebrating invention, inspiring youth

For More Information:

Stephanie Martinovich
Lemelson-MIT Program
617-258-0632
smartino@mit.edu

MIT HOSTS HIGH SCHOOL INVENTORS FROM ACROSS THE U.S. TO SHOWCASE SOLUTIONS TO COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Working prototypes of inventions that enable fresh food production, address gaps in rural healthcare and improve health and safety of firefighters are just some examples to be seen at the 13th annual EurekaFest event

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., June 19, 2019 –Today, the Lemelson-MIT (LMIT) Program hosts its 13th annual EurekaFest event that showcases novel products developed by high school students and serves as an example of the impact of invention education. Fifteen student teams from across the U.S., including first time representation from Kentucky and South Carolina, are convening on the MIT campus to demonstrate working prototypes of inventions that address community-based problems. EurekaFest is an annual culmination of the Lemelson-MIT Program’s unique InvenTeams® initiative that increases the value of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curriculum. The showcase opens tomorrow, June 20 from 2 to 5 PM in the Stata Center on the MIT campus (Building 32).

“EurekaFest demonstrates the power of invention education to change the way students see themselves, engage in the community and think about their futures,” notes Stephanie Couch, executive director for LMIT. “InvenTeam participants are over 40 percent female and many InvenTeam students have gone on to pursue STEM degrees and career paths that have put them well on their way to becoming the change agents of the future.”

For many participants, InvenTeams is their first exposure to a real-world application of STEM knowledge and design thinking. The InvenTeams experience cultivates the skillsets and mindsets that are critical for helping students navigate an evolving economy and career landscape.

Lemelson-MIT InvenTeams, one of the first invention education programs in the U.S., gives students the opportunity to solve real-world challenges they find meaningful. Over the course of an academic year, students research intellectual property, exchange ideas, design parts, talk with people in their local communities, build models and make modifications as they develop working prototypes of their inventions. Students cultivate leadership as well as technical skills through the team-based, year-long initiative as they address challenges and celebrate progress. Projects are collaborative efforts, driven by the students with guidance from their educator and professionals in the field who serve as mentors. The InvenTeam initiative fosters a “learning-by-doing” team environment fueled by inquiry-based thinking.

Published research indicates women and students from underrepresented backgrounds, benefit from team-based learning environments and a focus on real-world problem solving with the support of educators and mentors. As a result, InvenTeams has demonstrated success in inspiring and engaging these students to pursue STEM careers.

“For many of my students, the InvenTeams experience was their first exposure to the practical application of science, math and engineering,” said Katrina Hull, lead educator of McKay High School InvenTeam in Salem, Oregon. “As a result, students who hesitated at the idea of a STEM career or weren’t aware of the pathway are now enthusiastic about becoming engineers and are actively pursuing math, science and engineering classes.”

The Lemelson-MIT Program annually offers InvenTeam grants of up to \$10K each for 15 teams of high school students, educators and mentors from across the U.S. To be eligible, teachers must first apply and be selected as an Excite Award recipient prior to submitting their invention proposal for a grant.

EurekaFest events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit: <https://eurekafest.org/>.

ABOUT THE LEMELSON-MIT PROGRAM

The Lemelson-MIT Program celebrates outstanding inventors and inspires young people to pursue creative lives and careers through invention.

Jerome H. Lemelson, one of the most prolific American inventors, and his wife, Dorothy, founded the Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1994. It is funded by The Lemelson Foundation and administered by the School of Engineering at MIT, an institution with a strong ongoing commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for K-12 STEM education. For more information, visit Lemelson.MIT.edu.

ABOUT THE LEMELSON FOUNDATION

Based in Portland, Oregon, The Lemelson Foundation uses the power of invention to improve lives. Inspired by the belief that invention can solve many of the biggest economic and social challenges of our time, the Foundation helps the next generation of inventors and invention-based businesses to flourish. Established in the early 1990s by prolific inventor Jerome Lemelson and his wife Dorothy, the Foundation continues to be led by the Lemelson family. To date, the Foundation has made grants totaling over \$210 million in support of its mission. For more information, visit <http://lemelson.org>.

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