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BIOGEN IDEC FOUNDATION ESTABLISHES EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP TO PROMOTE STEM LEARNING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CHARLOTTE, DURHAM AND HENDERSON

RALEIGH, N.C., March 4, 2010 – Educators will have double the resources this year to inspire a passion for science, technology, engineering, and math in hundreds of North Carolina middle school students this year and prepare them for successful careers in those fields.

The Biogen Idec Foundation has donated \$20,000 to establish a partnership between Futures for Kids (F4K) and Citizen Schools-North Carolina. This partnership will pair the technology of F4K's internet-based career exploration and assessment tools with Citizen Schools' individualized academic support, 21st Century skill-building and interactive learning processes.

“The future success of science-based businesses is linked to the students now sitting in classrooms across the state” said Mike McBrierty, Senior Manager of Public Affairs for Biogen Idec. “By identifying students interested in STEM-related careers, we can educate them on the exciting career possibilities and make them aware of the resources available to help them achieve their dreams.”

F4K and Citizen Schools operate under a similar premise—by helping students explore their world and articulate their goals, they begin to understand the relevance of education to their long-term plans and gain confidence through personal responsibility and achievement. F4K's approach is a virtual program that partners with local educators to reach students all over the state, and Citizen Schools utilizes a trained staff of educators to support learning done during the school day through hands-on projects taught by volunteer community experts.

“We are committed to bringing the community into the classroom, and F4K gives our students a virtual connection to employers and volunteers across the state who are invested in our children's educational and civic success,” stated Jill Ullman, Development Director for Citizen Schools in North Carolina.

“The hands-on environment of Citizen Schools gives students the adult support they need as they’re making plans for their future through F4K,” said F4K Executive Director Susan Milliken. “We’re coupling high touch with technology to provide context for what our students are learning and to help them connect the dots.”

About Futures for Kids (F4K)

Futures for Kids is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that seeks to bridge the gap between the hopes and dreams of our students and the workforce development needs of our communities. Now reaching students in 45 counties, F4K uses technology to create a community of support around our kids, encouraging them to explore careers by connecting with Career Coaches and companies across North Carolina. For more information about F4K or to sign up as a Career Coach, please visit www.f4k.org.

About Citizen Schools

Citizen School partners with middle schools to expand the learning day for low-income children across the country. We mobilize a second shift of educators, who provide academic support, leadership development, and “apprenticeships”—hands-on projects taught by volunteers from business and civic organizations. At Citizen Schools, students develop the skills they need to succeed in high school, college, the workplace, and civic life.

About the Biogen Idec Foundation

The mission of the Biogen Idec Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives and contribute to the vitality of the communities where we operate, with a special emphasis on innovative ways to promote science literacy and encourage young people to consider science careers. Additional information about the Biogen Idec Foundation can be found at http://www.biogenidec.com/citizenship_biogen_idec_foundation.html

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