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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR BROWN, BPS STUDENTS JOIN EDUCATORS, SCIENTISTS AND BUSINESS LEADERS FOR THE BPS STEM EXPERIENCE KICK OFF

Buffalo, New York – With the start of the new academic year only weeks away in Buffalo, Mayor Byron Brown and Buffalo Public School students joined educators, scientists and business leaders at the Math, Science & Technology Preparatory School to officially kick-off the new **Buffalo Schools STEM Experience – Science Week All Year Long**.

"We're working every day to ensure our children in Buffalo are ready to learn, ready to grow and ready to succeed because our students are our future," said Mayor Brown. "I commend the vision and leadership of our STEM Partners for strategically expanding STEM-related opportunities that inform and encourage city youth to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics."

This public/private partnership is designed to further spark children's interest in STEM careers by using hands-on learning year-round to engage, excite and educate students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. Inaugurated last year with the first annual Buffalo Public Schools Science Week, this year's greatly expanded program begins at the start of the new academic year. It includes:

- A new Speakers Bureau
- City-wide reading events in collaboration with SUNY READ Aloud and the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
- Second annual BPS Science Week, scheduled for March 14, 2015-March 20, 2015.

Buffalo Public Schools Interim Superintendent Donald Ogilvie stated, "I want to thank Mayor Brown for bringing attention to our STEM Experience mission. Programs like this create collaboration between our students, the City of Buffalo, local colleges and universities, the business community, and the burgeoning medical corridor. These kinds of relationships help students to form goals and meet them. As the medical corridor grows, our students will focus their academics toward future employment there, and the growth of Buffalo in terms of people and innovative science, technology, engineering and math fields will be realized. Graduation is dependent on attendance, and attendance is dependent on creating schools and programs the students want to be present for. I can't think of many things more exciting for our students than to be given a glimpse of this grown-up, high-tech world that will redefine Buffalo, and that they will be a part of."

"Student engagement and success in science, technology, engineering, and math is increasingly important, with STEM careers currently growing at a rate 2.5 times faster than those in non-STEM fields across New York State," said SUNY Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher. "By convening leaders throughout the community as part of the Buffalo Schools STEM Experience, Mayor Brown and all involved have taken another important step toward improving student success in STEM from cradle to career. SUNY is proud to be a part of this creative and important partnership."

"UB is proud to partner with the City of Buffalo and the Buffalo Public Schools in this important educational endeavor, and we are grateful for the unique perspective and expertise that our corporate partners Praxair and Life Technologies / Thermo Fisher Scientific bring to this effort," said University at Buffalo President Dr. Satish K. Tripathi. "As we work together to build a strong and thriving knowledge-based economy in Western New York—particularly with our region's burgeoning life sciences and advanced manufacturing industries—STEM education plays a critical role in preparing and educating the students who will be tomorrow's leaders. This initiative builds on our ongoing efforts to give our region's students a glimpse of the exciting opportunities available to them in the STEM fields, and provide them with first-hand experience with how research and discovery can be applied to 21st century challenges—here in Buffalo and around the globe."

"When I arrived in Buffalo, I was pleased to learn of Buffalo State's impressive record of collaboration with the Buffalo Public Schools in several areas, including many STEM initiatives," said Buffalo State President Katherine Conway-Turner. "The Buffalo Schools STEM Experience provides us with an additional pathway through a wonderful public/private partnership to expand on what we are already doing here at Buffalo State. The children of this city are truly our future. Ensuring that they are prepared for the society that lies ahead of them as adults is of utmost importance."

"Whether through our on-campus events, science and engineering summer camps or career-focused curriculum, Erie Community College continues to support the importance of STEM-related education across Western New York," said ECC President Jack Quinn. "Current and future students' ability to navigate this educational focus will not only earn them stable career opportunities, but will also help surge our region forward. The Buffalo Schools STEM Experience initiative understands this, and we proudly support these efforts."

Presented in collaboration with Buffalo and Erie County Public Libraries, Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo Public Schools, City of Buffalo, Erie Community College, Life Technologies/Thermo Fisher Scientific, Praxair, State University of New York (SUNY), SUNY Buffalo State and University at Buffalo, this collaborative effort continues to underscore the critical importance of STEM fields to future employment in Buffalo's emerging life sciences and advanced manufacturing industries.

"Educating our future workforce in the STEM fields is critical to the long-term success of our region's economy," said WNY Regional Economic Development Co-Chair Howard Zemsky. "We can drive innovation and grow our creative community when we get students excited about science."

Mary Jean Jakubowski, Director of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, said, "The Library has many books, activities, programs, materials and databases to support and increase literacy in science, technology and mathematics. We are very excited to be a partner in the Buffalo Public Schools STEM Experience and celebrate Science Week. Our materials are available year-round with databases and electronic resources available 24/7 through our website www.buffalolib.org. Best of all the materials are free for borrowing with your Buffalo & Erie County Public Library card."

The Math, Science & Technology Preparatory School will kick off the new Speaker Series this fall. Throughout the year, Speakers Bureau participants will visit Buffalo Public Schools, engaging students in hands-on activities and demonstrations designed to spark interest in science while complementing the teacher's lessons. Initially, 7th and 11th grade students will be the targets of this program as these are considered the 'decision making years' for this age group.

"Companies can inspire the next generations of scientists and engineers by spending time in today's classrooms," said Staff Scientist Mwita Phelps, Life Technologies/Thermo Fisher Scientific. "We're asking participants in the Speakers Bureau to share their knowledge and perhaps, more importantly, their enthusiasm for what they do so students understand the great career opportunities that exist in STEM fields."

BPS Science Week in March will focus on the human genome, with activities being developed for all grades.

"Our future in medicine and in health depends on understanding the information contained in the human genome, so it's a great topic for Science Week," said Dr. Norma J. Nowak, Director of Science and Technology at UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences. "It can help students understand the consequences of their individualized health choices and we hope it will encourage several of them to pursue health related careers ranging from genetic counselors to those across the fields of bioinformatics to health information technology. We want to empower the next generation to explore the boundaries of genomic medicine and the opportunities created."

Students, demonstrating marshmallow launchers, were the highlight of today's event. The summer camp group, led by *MST Science Camp Teacher* and UB doctoral student Heather Rudolph, designed launchers that demonstrated the laws of physics and used engineering capabilities in their development. In addition, guests were treated to ice cream the students made with the use of liquid nitrogen.

Attendees at today's kickoff included: City of Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, Buffalo Public Schools Interim Superintendent Donald Ogilvie, SUNY Trustee Dr. Eunice Lewin, University at Buffalo President Dr. Satish K. Tripathi, SUNY Buffalo State President Dr. Katherine Conway-Turner, Erie Community College President Jack Quinn, Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chair, businessman and developer Howard Zemsky, Staff Scientist Mwita Phelps of Life Technologies/Thermo Fisher Scientific, Director of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Libraries Mary Jean Jakubowski, Dr. Norma J. Nowak, Director of Science and Technology, UB's NYS Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences, as well as a number of invited guests, including elected leaders, teachers and students.

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