



For immediate release

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What is a Robot?

Third graders from Title 1 schools can tell you what a robot is — and how to build one.

KID Museum and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) have partnered to pilot a robotics program for third graders from two elementary schools that receive Title 1 funds. The pilot program, titled *What is a Robot?*, culminates next week with a showcase event. Community leaders and media organizers are invited to come see the students' robots, and learn about their experience creating them, on Thursday, December 13, at Kemp Mills Elementary School in Silver Spring.

The program, which KID Museum and MCPS hope to greatly expand for the 2019-20 school year, includes two in-school sessions, professional development for teachers, and three KID Museum visits where students learn skills in coding and robotics, as well as the design process — planning and building robots that can perform simple tasks.

“Robotics and coding are great creative tools. They help kids think critically, gain confidence in their abilities, and solve problems imaginatively,” explains KID Museum Director of Teaching and Learning, Amanda Puerto. “This program combines the principles of robotics with open-ended exploration and art — meaning that no matter their interest, children will find an entry point that excites them.”

The elementary pilot builds upon the success of the *Invent the Future Challenge*, the cornerstone of the groundbreaking partnership between KID Museum, MCPS, Montgomery County, and private sponsors, which is currently in its second year. The Invent the Future

Challenge asks middle school students to invent solutions to real-world problems, and provides skill-building sessions at KID Museum. Over 500 area students took part in the challenge last year, the majority from families and communities impacted by poverty and traditionally underrepresented in STEM careers. The museum anticipates nearly doubling that number this year.

“It’s important that we expose younger students to these powerful learning opportunities as well,” says Cara Lesser, KID Museum Founder and Executive Director. “We’re partnering with schools to expose more kids to robotics and coding at an earlier age. Schools understand that these skills build a strong foundation for STEM, both in school and later on in their professional careers. Not only that, coding has been shown to positively impact everything from math to literacy.”

Media organizations are invited to attend the “What is a Robot?” Third Grade Pilot Showcase on Thursday, December 13, 2:15 - 3:30, at Kemp Mill Elementary School in Silver Spring. If you are interested in attending, please email emma@kid-museum.org. RSVP is required.

About KID Museum

KID Museum is an independent, mission-driven nonprofit serving 55,000 people annually in its creative learning space, on-site at schools, and at community events. A national leader in maker-based education, the museum seeks to spark the creative potential of all children, and inspire the next generation of innovators. Core to its mission is ensuring that all youth, especially those who are traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields, have access to transformative learning opportunities that will pave the way for their future success — and the shared success of our community. For more information, please visit www.kid-museum.org.