



For Immediate Release:

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KID Museum Teams up with Amazon Future Engineer to Offer New No-Cost, Professional Development to Support Educators in Delivering Maker Learning Experiences to Students

Elementary and Middle School Educators from Montgomery County Public Schools and District of Columbia Public Schools Begin Semester-Long Curriculum- Aligned Program

(February 18, 2021, Bethesda, MD) As schools continue to navigate virtual, hybrid and in-person teaching, educators across the greater Washington region now have access to [KID Museum Maker Learning Professional Development Program](#), a new professional development initiative created by [KID Museum](#) and supported through a collaboration with [Amazon Future Engineer](#). Through this pilot program, 50 teachers from District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) will be trained to deliver high-impact, maker-based learning curriculum to over 2,000 elementary and middle school students.

More than half of teachers nationwide have reported a decline in their sense of success during the pandemic, according to a recent [Annenberg Brown University Study](#). To support educators and students and nurture a maker mindset, KID Museum, a pioneering educational makerspace, and Amazon Future Engineer, a childhood-to-career computer science education program, has joined forces to help teachers to deliver real skills development coupled with confidence building, creative problem solving and youth agency.

“Amazon Future Engineer recognizes teachers are one key to meaningful learning experiences for students,” said Dr. Shanika Hope, Head of Amazon Future Engineer, US and a former K-12 school

administrator and educator. “We’re excited to team with KID Museum to provide professional development experiences that enable teachers to bring high-impact learning to their students. The power of maker learning is transformative and we know these skills are increasingly critical to future workforce success.”

KID Museum’s “Mind of a Maker” framework serves as the foundation of **KID Museum Maker Learning Professional Development Program**, which was created to fuel a passion for teaching-based learning modules, while also building teacher capacity for the future.

Karen Cole, Deputy Chief, Academic and Creative Empowerment at DCPS said, “Making is a means to support larger goals like agency, equity, and creativity in young people. We hope the participating teachers will feel supported and empowered to use this program to offer deep, engaging, and powerful learning experiences to their students and grow their skills as educators in integrating making into classroom instruction.”

Kicking off this week, the first cohort includes 50 educators from MCPS and DCPS—primarily elementary and middle school teachers, and/or school STEM specialists and media specialists — from schools that include a high percentage of free and reduced meals in their student populations and/or a Title I designation. During the semester-long program, teachers will participate in professional development, individualized coaching, and a ready-to-implement series of hands-on maker learning experiences that are aligned to the districts’ curricula and that can be delivered to students virtually or in hybrid learning environments. In addition, these teachers will have the opportunity to share best practices for maker learning in a virtual setting with fellow instructors, and become a part of a network of teacher champions, both within their schools and across the region.

“Every time I walk away from a KID Museum professional development session, I have something I can take into my classroom and use,” said Jo Belyea-Doerrman, a 7th grade teacher at Shady Grove Middle School, part of Montgomery County Public Schools. “That is not always the case with Professional Development. In this program, I get to experience what the kids are doing; I get to do the hands-on activities myself, so I’m engaged. I always look forward to it — just like the students always look forward to my class when we are doing maker activities.”

“KID Museum continues to expand its maker education offerings, both virtual and hybrid, for teachers, parents and students alike. By working with incredible partners like Amazon, we can build customized programs for educators, students and their families. In this instance, our Professional Development program is designed to help educators bring maker learning principles and hands-on experiences into more classrooms and foster a love of learning, and ultimately, make an impact in the lives of students across our community,” said Cara Lesser, the Founder and Executive Director of KID Museum.

[Amazon Future Engineer](#) is providing funding for the pilot. Amazon Future Engineer is Amazon’s childhood-to-career program that aims to inspire, educate, and prepare students from underserved communities and groups currently underrepresented in the tech fields with access to high-quality

computer science education. To date, the program has supported more than 550,000 K-12 students in more than 5,000 schools nationwide. Amazon Future Engineer is part of Amazon's \$50 million investment in computer science and STEM education and has donated more than \$20 million to organizations that promote computer science and STEM education.

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About KID Museum

KID Museum is the region's pioneering experiential museum and educational makerspace. We foster the "Mind of a Maker" and empower the next generation with the skills to invent the future. Through hands-on programs, we challenge young people to be active makers, building agency, confidence, and creative problem-solving skills. We design and deliver programs across the full continuum of learning for kids in pre-k through middle school in partnership with educators and schools. Our weekend onsite programs, community events, and live, virtual sessions encourage families to learn and explore together. We are part of a growing movement to remake education for every young person, putting them in the driver's seat of their learning and trusting them to be agents of change. For more information, please visit www.kid-museum.org.