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[KID Museum](#) and [Identity](#)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KID Museum and Identity Launch Innovative Pilot to Boost STEM Literacy Among Latino Youth

(BETHESDA, MD) KID Museum and Identity today announced an innovative effort to improve STEM literacy among Latino 2nd and 3rd graders in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Beginning this school year, [KID Museum](#) will work in tandem with [Identity](#) to provide community-based out-of-school time educational services to ensure Latino students develop the foundational math, science, and technology skills that are essential for long-term academic and career success.

Made possible through the support and advocacy of Maryland Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen, this pilot program will build confidence and skills in STEM subjects during what we know is a critical inflection point in a student's education - the elementary years.

"When we spark an interest in STEM from an early age, and pair it with the right resources, we give children the opportunity and confidence to thrive in school and their future jobs," said Senator Van Hollen, a member of the Appropriations Committee. "We worked to deliver \$704,000 in direct federal funding to support KID Museum and Identity's efforts to close the Latino STEM education gap in Montgomery County and empower more young Marylanders to meet their full potential."

"KID Museum and Identity are creating a national model for using STEM education to unleash the full potential of every student in every community," Senator Cardin added. "Federal investment in their program will help close the achievement gap for Latino youth and give more students the skills they need to compete globally. By leveraging our partnerships, we are preparing students for success today and for the future."

The Need Is Clear

The timing could not be more critical. Latino youth now make up 35% of Montgomery County Public Schools, and according to data from the Maryland State Department of Education, only 23.1% of K-5th grade Latino students were proficient in math in SY22-23. This impact carries through higher education and careers. According to [EdTrust](#), 2 in 5 Latino students say they enjoy STEM subjects and aspire to go to college, but fewer than 3% are enrolling in advanced STEM courses in high school and less than 8% of the STEM workforce is Latino.

To help reverse this troubling trend, KID Museum is building on a model it has tested across years of direct service to schools and students to create a culturally responsive curriculum and training tools that will allow youth development workers to bring high-quality, hands-on STEM learning to their students. Identity's trained staff will deliver the program in their established elementary out-of-school

time program and complement the student curriculum with an aligned parent engagement program that builds understanding of STEM pathways and provides home-based STEM enrichment activities.

“For STEM careers to be a real option for all youth, we need a holistic approach that purposefully builds a sense of belonging from a young age and intentionally breaks down barriers to participation. Identity is committed to nurturing students’ confidence and foundational skills in STEM, which we know are necessary first steps to a career in STEM,” said Identity Co-founder and Executive Director Diego Uriburu.

Creating a Scalable Model

Federal funds will support pilot testing of this year-long program in four high-need Montgomery County Public Schools, reaching 100 2nd and 3rd grade Latino students and their families.

The larger goal is to develop new, effective models of support that can be implemented in partnership with other youth development providers throughout the state of Maryland and across the country to reach more students and their families.

“This pilot will begin with 100 students, but we will come away with a validated curriculum and a model that can be replicated by other established community organizations that have strong connections to minority youth,” said KID Museum Founder and CEO Cara Lesser. “Designing new and effective ways to build meaningful and sustained STEM engagement for diverse populations is work the broader community can and should support to ensure an inclusive economy of the future.”

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About KID Museum

KID Museum is the nation’s leading center for maker learning. KID’s in-school and out-of-school programs provide hands-on experiences that incorporate tech, engineering, science, and math and teach creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills. KID prioritizes serving youth from under resourced communities and provides more than half of its programs at reduced or no cost.

About Identity

Identity’s mission is to create opportunities for Latino and other historically underserved youth to realize their highest potential and thrive. Identity provides programs and services after school, in the community, and on playing fields that are complemented by family case management, mental health and substance use counseling, non-clinical emotional support, and recreation. Identity also works to empower parents to engage in their children’s education and be champions for their success and the success of the community.