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Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Kicks Off Million Women Mentors Program to Benefit Young Women in STEM Programs

Monday, March 9, 2015

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New Jersey Aims to Recruit 6,000 Mentors by 2018, Invites Government, Business, Education and Community Representatives

Trenton, NJ – As part of New Jersey's first STEM Week, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today announced the kick-off of the Million Women Mentors (MWM) initiative in New Jersey, which seeks to recruit at least 6,000 mentors for young women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by 2018.

"I am thrilled to announce the New Jersey Million Women Mentors program, which will provide guidance to our young women with an interest in STEM and help them become tomorrow's leaders," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "By engaging our young women on the benefits of a career in STEM fields, we are not only investing in their future but ours as well. I applaud all the volunteer mentors for sharing their time to serve as positive role models for these young women."

MWM is a collective effort of corporate sponsors, strategic partners and organizations representing more than 18 million women and girls. The program welcomes corporations, government entities, higher education groups and non-profit organizations to serve as mentors to increase the percentage of young women pursuing and obtaining degrees and careers in STEM fields.

"Celebrating the state's STEM economy is especially important today because, by 2018, New Jersey needs to fill 269,000 STEM jobs," said Anthony Cicatielli, President of the Research & Development Council of New Jersey. "Now is the time to embrace the STEM economy and encourage its growth in New Jersey, and also to introduce students to our state's rich history of innovation. Once they see what we've done in this state, from Edison to streptomycin, they're going to be inspired to keep the legacy going through this century."

In the past 10 years, growth in STEM jobs has been three times greater than in non-STEM jobs, with 80% of the fastest-growing occupations in the United States dependent upon STEM knowledge and skills. While women comprise 48% of the US workforce, just 24% of women are in STEM fields.

In its first year, MWM has more than 272,000 men and women serving as mentors, coaches, role models, partners and sponsors. The program has pledges from 27 states, 58 partner organizations and 30 major sponsors. More information on the initiative can be found online at www.millionwomenmentors.org.

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