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Million Women Mentors Launches National Movement to Mobilize One Million Mentors of Girls & Young Women in STEM Education and Careers

JANUARY 8, 2014 - WASHINGTON, D.C.— Million Women Mentors (MWM), a ground-breaking collaborative effort designed to engage one million science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) mentors, launches today at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The initiative aims to educate and empower girls and young women to actively pursue STEM education and careers. In conjunction with National Mentoring Month, MWM has constructed a vast network of 13 corporate sponsors, and more than 40 partner organizations that are dedicated to cultivating multiple pathways of mentoring to bolster girls' confidence and increase access to professionals working in the STEM field. Collectively, these public-private entities represent more than 18 million women and girls.

Inasmuch, young girls and women are less likely than their male counterparts to work in STEM fields. In fact, just 24 percent of women work in STEM fields. The good news is that women in STEM careers earn 92 cents for every dollar male-STEM counterparts earn versus 75 cents in other fields. What's more, 80 percent of the fastest growing occupations in the United States depend on mastery of mathematics and scientific knowledge and skills.

MWM is an initiative of STEMconnector®, the national organization that works closely with corporations and thousands of entities to assist in STEM best practices and smart STEM investments.

"*We have the responsibility as a country to move the needle on girls and young women in STEM careers from 24 percent of our current workforce to 50 percent,*" said Edie Fraser, CEO of STEMconnector® and Co-Founder of Million Women Mentors.

Today's launch includes the debut of the website (www.millionwomenmentors.org) that will be developed in phases with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). The first phase will include a nationwide call to action to capture and pledge commitments from individuals, organizations and companies that have an interest in mentoring. In the second and third phases, the website will be enhanced with matching capabilities to pair mentors with

mentees in STEM fields. Additionally, the site will recognize those with model mentoring programs and learning resources.

"*STEM careers offer women and girls the opportunity to engage in some of the most exciting realms of innovation. TCS believes we collectively need an all hands on deck approach, clearing hurdles as women navigate careers in STEM, and paving the way towards realizing greater equality and economic success,"* said Surya Kant, Tata Consultancy Services' President for North America, UK & Europe. *"We are proud to be a Founding Partner of MWM and pledge our commitment to make mentoring accessible to girls and women across the nation, especially those from underrepresented minorities."*

Founding Sponsors include: Accenture, Cisco, Sodexo, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) in addition to Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, Microsoft Research, Walmart and ADP. Silver sponsors include: Adecco Group North America, General Motors, Intellectual Ventures and UST Global.

"*As a proud founding partner of MWM, nothing is more important than mentoring and supporting girls and women into STEM careers, especially in the underserved communities. We are thrilled to work in more than 1,400 communities with more than eight million girls,*" said Karen Peterson, President and CEO of National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) and one of the initiative's founding partners.

"*For Accenture, the combination of STEM and women is a natural fit,*" said Jorge Benitez, Accenture's Chief Executive of the United States and senior managing director of North America. "*Technology-led innovation is at the heart of our business, and our women are key to our ability to deliver high performance to our clients. Pairing girls and young women with successful role models is a key step to encouraging them to bring their intelligence, talent and ability to STEM careers, and we are pleased to be part of this important initiative.*"

"It's incongruent that in 2013 women accounted for 57 percent of bachelor's degrees awarded in the U.S., but STEM accounted for less than 10 percent of all degrees," said Michael Norris, Chief Operating Officer & Market President, Sodexo North America. *"Given that by 2020, 81 percent of new workforce entrants will be women or minorities, at Sodexo we hear a call to action today to mentor and prepare girls and young women for unbridled success in tomorrow's demanding global marketplace, and are excited to support this critical STEM careers imperative."*
"We need to do more than just tell young girls that they can be engineers, rocket scientists, or computer programmers. Mentors can inspire girls and give them an insider's view of what it's like to work in STEM. That's why AAUW fully supports this new initiative, which complements our ongoing efforts to empower women and girls as innovators and leaders in science and math. Career options in STEM disciplines are endless, but we won't reach

our full potential as a nation until women and underrepresented groups are fully included," said Linda D. Hallman, CAE, AAUW Executive Director and CEO.

MWM is the collective action of 42 national partners (as of January 8, 2014). The four founding partners are STEMconnector®, National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP), MentorNet, and NPower. Lead partners include The National 4-H Council, Girls Inc., The Manufacturing Institute, MENTOR, Teach for America, AAUW, Great Minds in STEM, American Institute of Architects (AIA), Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), Business and Professional Women's Foundation (BPW), National Center for Women in Technology (NCWIT), YWCA, Junior Achievement, Sally Ride Science, Skills USA, Girl Scouts of the USA, Lean In, US News & World Report, Diversity Woman, Diplomatic Courier, Enterprising Women, Discovery Communications, National Utilities Diversity Council (NUDC), National Women's Political Caucus, eWomen Network, Girlstart, Global WIN, Innovate+Educate, My College Options, National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE), US 2020, Women in Engineering ProActive Network (WEPAN), Computer Clubhouse Network, LATINA*style*, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), Success in the City, Arizona State University, and Nepris.

The launch includes several VIP speakers, partners, and an original song by GRAMMY award winner Tena Clark. Television star and author Hill Harper will also attend the launch event. To further elevate the importance of mentoring girls and young women in STEM, all MWM partners and sponsors will highlight part of their organizational efforts related to girls and young women, mentoring and STEM during January, in conjunction with National Mentoring Month. In addition to events and partner efforts from these entities, MWM will also engage support from women Senators through mentor/mentee luncheon and reception to be held March 5. For the most updated calendar of events, please go to www.MillionWomenMentors.org.

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