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STARBASE Minnesota selected as a Tekne Award Finalist

MINNEAPOLIS, Oct. 10, 2018 – STARBASE Minnesota is a finalist for the Minnesota High Tech Association 2018 Tekne Awards in the Community Impact category. For the past two decades, the Tekne Awards have recognized organizations that are leading-edge innovators in science and technology within Minnesota. The 2018 Tekne Awards ceremony on Nov. 29 will reveal winners among the finalists in 16 categories.

STARBASE Minnesota's innovative STEM educational experiences for youth have reached over 63,000 4th – 6th grade students in the Twin Cities and beyond, with a recent expansion to a second site in Duluth. Building on partnerships with local communities, schools, the military, governments, and many of our top industry leaders, STARBASE Minnesota provides our state with an engaging and effective high-tech approach to STEM education. This unique program immerses students, primarily those underserved in STEM, in a world where they create, test, and learn from their own ideas and designs while solving real-world problems. Over 17 local STEM corporations and the MN Guard partner with and invest in STARBASE to enhance the program. This novel approach to reaching our next generation of leaders placed the program in the top three finalists in the Community Impact category for the 2018 Tekne Awards.

Kim Van Wie, Executive Director shared just how delighted the STARBASE Board and staff are with this recognition as a finalist, "The STARBASE Minnesota program is unique, bringing the public and private sectors together on a common vision of inspiring and educating a future STEM-skilled workforce that increases access for those underrepresented in STEM while contributing to the socio-economic strength of our communities. We reach students early enough before any pre-conceived notions they may have of themselves in STEM take hold, and we expose them to a fascinating, technological world where they discover their creative talents and design skills while planning and engineering a mission to an exciting and very topical place —Mars. While having fun and solving problems at the same time, our students are building a frame of reference for STEM in the real world, a newfound confidence, and an awareness of careers that we hope helps guide them throughout their years." Mike Thyken, Chairman of STARBASE Board of Directors said, "It is an honor to be recognized as a finalist for this most prestigious award, and to serve these students and their communities. We are thrilled!"

Margaret Anderson Kelliher, president and CEO of the Minnesota High Tech Association, said, "The Tekne Award finalists this year represent the ongoing strength of innovative Minnesota-based companies. They are pioneers in leading-edge science and technology that has impact around the globe."

- In this past fiscal year alone, STARBASE graduates represented the richly diverse communities of the metro area: 75% were children of color, 60% low income, and 28% ELL (English as a Second Language)
- 97% of STARBASE MN students increased knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering and math as measured by pre to posttest, and expanded awareness of STEM careers.
- 97% of students reported STARBASE made learning fun; 90% of students reported increased interest in STEM

- 8-10 years later, 99% of former STARBASE students surveyed thought STARBASE was valuable learning experience; 83% felt the program helped them understand STEM better and 79% said it increased their interest in STEM; additional positive impacts on graduation and college enrollment were also observed.

About STARBASE Minnesota

STARBASE Minnesota is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, founded in 1993 whose mission is to educate and inspire youth in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). A public/private partnership that works, STARBASE engages STEM-passionate stakeholders from government, military, education, industry and local communities. STARBASE is a program of the Department of Defense, hosted by the MN National Guard. Since 1993, STARBASE has served over 63,000 youth in the Twin Cities and beyond. The MN National Guard provides state of the art facilities, access to an exciting, technology-rich learning environment and inkind services. STEM-focused military volunteers, along with industry engineers and scientists who, together with STARBASE's top notch educators, bring STEM to life for students and teachers. In addition, these stakeholders invest financially making STARBASE one of the most successful, mutually beneficial collaborations of federal, state, corporate and private entities in the region working together on a common vision of developing a love of STEM in students, and future STEM-skilled workforce. STARBASE's innovative, engaging, evidenced-based 20-25-hour STEM programs for students grades 4-6 are in high demand. Further, STARBASE has proven to be a successful model for replication with the recent start-up in Duluth demonstrating potential for replication throughout MN. Currently, 11 Twin Cities and Duluth area school districts (60 schools) participate in STARBASE, free of charge, primarily students underrepresented in STEM. STARBASE has a 22-member Board of Directors and 12-member Duluth Advisory Board with backgrounds in business, education, military and government. All are passionate about igniting students' interest in STEM and creating pathways to future career opportunities in STEM.

www.starbasemn.org

About the Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA)

The Minnesota High Tech Association is an innovation and technology association united in fueling Minnesota's prosperity and making Minnesota a top five technology state. We bring together the people of Minnesota's science and technology ecosystem and lead the way in bringing science and technology issues to leaders at Minnesota's Capitol and Washington, D.C. MHTA is the only membership organization that represents Minnesota's entire technology-based economy. Our members include organizations of every size – involved in virtually every aspect of technology creation, production, application and education in Minnesota.

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