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MAYOR EMANUEL HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF STEM EDUCATION AT THE SEEK PROGRAM KICK OFF

Mayor Rahm Emanuel visited with students at the Summer Engineering Experience for Kids (SEEK) program kick off today at Miles Davis Magnet Academy. General Electric (GE), the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), and the Illinois Institute of Technology have partnered with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to launch the SEEK program for the first time in Chicago. As part of the Chicago City of Learning (CCOL), this program provides students the opportunity to earn digital badges for developing skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education.

"I am proud to welcome the SEEK program to the City of Chicago, since this program will expand students' access to high quality STEM learning opportunities that will challenge them, expose them to new interests, and help them develop competitive skills for a 21st century economy" said Mayor Emanuel. "The SEEK program complements our City-wide strategy to increase Chicago students' access to a rigorous STEM education to prepare them to excel inside and outside the classroom."

NSBE developed this free program in 2007 to offer a diverse, hands-on engineering design curriculum to encourage students to consider the STEM fields as a future career path. This summer, 150 SEEK students grades three through five will learn science and engineering concepts while engaging in team competitions during the program, which runs July 7 to July 25.

Mayor Emanuel remains focused on a city-wide strategy to increase Chicago students' access to high-quality STEM learning experiences from early childhood through college and career. The City of Chicago is home to five Early College STEM schools that have been paired with corporate partners to provide mentors, internships and feedback on the curriculum. CPS also has the most comprehensive K-12 computer science education plan in a major school district. CCOL and the SEEK program will help build toward Mayor Emanuel's goal to triple the number of Chicago students earning STEM credentials by 2018.

To learn more about summer learning opportunities like SEEK, students and families can visit www.ChicagoCityofLearning.org

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Photo Credit: Brooke Collins // City of Chicago

Photo Caption: Mayor Emanuel visits with SEEK students at program kick off