



## Biogen Idec Foundation Awards \$250,000 Grant to Citizen Schools to Invest in Science Education in Massachusetts and North Carolina

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– Increased Commitment Will Help Citizen Schools Expand its Educational Apprenticeship Program to Reach Approximately 1,950 Middle School Students –

BOSTON & RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Citizen Schools, a national nonprofit organization that partners with middle schools to expand the learning day for low-income students, today announced a \$250,000 grant from the [Biogen Idec Foundation](#) to help fund Citizen Schools' innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) apprenticeship programs in Massachusetts and North Carolina. Biogen Idec Foundation's commitment of talent and financial support will help Citizen Schools deepen its impact on student learning and engagement at its locations in Boston, Chelsea, Mass., and Durham, N.C.

Citizen Schools partners with middle schools nationally to expand the school day for children in underserved communities through academic mentoring and skill-building apprenticeships. The hands-on projects foster authentic learning experiences and are taught by volunteer professionals, or Citizen Teachers, who share their expertise and passions in engaging ways.

"Our apprenticeships bring relevance and a unique hands-on learning opportunity to the school day for students, sparking new potential career interests and increasing their engagement," said Pat Kirby, Vice President and Executive Director of Citizen Schools Massachusetts. "We are incredibly grateful for the Biogen Idec Foundation's leadership support. The investment will help Citizen Schools increase the number of students that can access these exciting, real-world STEM opportunities with biologists, computer programmers, financial analysts, and more."

"One of our goals is to give back to the communities where we work while supporting effective STEM education programs globally. This program with Citizen Schools provides us with an opportunity to inspire and prepare students for successful STEM careers—aligning with our focus of making science exciting and accessible," said Tony Kingsley, Chairman, Biogen Idec Foundation. "There's simply no better way to engage our next generation of STEM leaders than through hands-on learning experiments that show them what's possible."

The Biogen Idec Foundation supports Citizen Schools' apprenticeships in Massachusetts through a 10-week course at the Biogen Idec Community Lab. The 90-minute per week course has helped Boston students transform into junior scientists. Suited in lab coats, the students conduct experiments using the same state-of-the-art equipment and tools that Biogen Idec scientists utilize to discover and create new medicine. The apprenticeship program is helping to ensure a more diverse 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce skilled in the STEM job sectors, which are prevalent industries in both Boston and Durham.

The expanded support in North Carolina will be modeled on the success of the program in Boston. This includes a new Biogen Idec Community Lab that will open at Biogen Idec's Research Triangle Park office, so that students can work side-by-side with Biogen Idec scientists. Biogen Idec employees will begin volunteering at the new Community Lab this fall.

"We are excited to launch our new STEM apprenticeship program with the Biogen Idec Foundation in North Carolina and model the success of the STEM apprenticeships in Massachusetts," said Jake House, Executive Director of Citizen Schools North Carolina. "This investment will help connect the best volunteers to our students to inspire and engage with them in the essential subjects of science and technology."

### About Citizen Schools

Citizen Schools is a national nonprofit organization that partners with middle schools to expand the learning day for children in low-income communities. Citizen Schools mobilizes a team of educators to teach real-world learning projects and provide academic support, in order to help all students discover and achieve their dreams. For more information, please visit <http://www.citizenschools.org/>.

### About The Biogen Idec Foundation, Inc.

The Biogen Idec Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of peoples' lives and contribute to the vitality of the communities in which the company operates, with a special emphasis on innovative ways to promote science literacy and encourage young people to consider science careers. Additional information about the Biogen Idec Foundation can be found at: [http://www.biogenidec.com/citizenship\\_biogen\\_idec\\_foundation.html](http://www.biogenidec.com/citizenship_biogen_idec_foundation.html)

### About Biogen Idec

Through cutting-edge science and medicine, Biogen Idec discovers, develops and delivers to patients worldwide innovative therapies for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases, hemophilia and autoimmune disorders. Founded in 1978, Biogen Idec is the world's oldest independent biotechnology company. Patients worldwide benefit from its leading multiple sclerosis therapies, and the company generates more than \$5 billion in annual revenues. For product labeling, press releases and additional information about the company, please visit: <http://www.biogenidec.com/>

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