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National 4-H Council and HughesNet® Team Up to Spark Youth Interest in Science, Technology Careers

CHEVY CHASE, Md., Feb. 11, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- With statistics showing the U.S. falling behind in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and careers, National 4-H Council and HughesNet announced today a new partnership to introduce more American youth to hands-on, community-based STEM learning.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20110112/NE29456LOGO>)

The partnership includes a sponsorship from Hughes Network Systems, the operators of HughesNet, to demonstrate the excitement and opportunities of STEM through "Tech Takeover Days" at national 4-H camps; science events at local fairs; and National Youth Science Day - a national science experiment that engages young scientists from around the country. The effort will include a focus on small communities where resources for science-focused community programs are limited.

"With the clear evidence that U.S. teens are losing interest in science, technology, engineering and math, there's no better time than now for National 4-H Council and HughesNet to collaborate on inspiring the next generation of STEM leaders," said Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO, National 4-H Council. "4-H is America's largest youth development organization and HughesNet is America's #1 satellite Internet provider, so I am very optimistic about the great impact we'll achieve by combining our energy and resources to address this critical problem."

Experts credit technological innovation with almost half of U.S. economic growth over the past 50 years, and nearly all of the 30 fastest-growing occupations in the next decade will require at least some background in STEM. Yet, only 45 percent of U.S. high school graduates in 2011 were ready for college work in math and 30 percent were ready in science.[1]

"Both of our organizations serve small, local rural and ex-urban communities in America," said Mike Cook, senior vice president, Hughes North American Division. "We are equally passionate about STEM education and excited about our partnership with 4-H, helping build future technology leaders who will power our nation's competitiveness in a global economy."

Through a combination of targeted outreach and customer communications, Hughes will also help 4-H re-connect with its 25 million alumni across North America.

To learn more about the National 4-H Council and HughesNet partnership visit www.hughesnet.com/4h.

About 4-H

4-H is a community of seven million young people around the world learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. National 4-H Council is the private sector, non-profit partner of the Cooperative Extension System and 4-H National Headquarters located at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In the United States, 4-H programs are implemented by 109 land-grant universities and Cooperative Extension through more than 3,000 local offices serving every county and parish in the country. Outside the United States, 4-H programs operate through independent, country-led organizations in more than 50 countries.

Learn more about 4-H at www.4-H.org, find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/4-H and Twitter at <https://twitter.com/4H>.

About Hughes Network Systems

Hughes Network Systems, LLC (Hughes) is the world's leading provider of satellite broadband for home and office, delivering innovative network technologies, managed services, and solutions for enterprises and governments globally. HughesNet is the #1 high-speed satellite Internet service in the marketplace, with offerings to suit every budget. To date, Hughes has shipped more than 3.3 million systems to customers in over 100 countries, representing over 50 percent market share. Its products employ global standards approved by the TIA, ETSI and ITU organizations, including IPoS/DVB-S2, RSM-A, and GMR-1. Headquartered outside Washington, D.C., in Germantown, Maryland, USA, Hughes operates sales and support offices worldwide, and is a wholly owned subsidiary of EchoStar Corporation (NASDAQ: SATS), a premier global provider of satellite operations and digital TV solutions. For additional information about Hughes, please visit www.hughes.com.

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[1] Change The Equation: STEMtistics - <http://changetheequation.org/why-stem>

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