



## ANNUAL STEAM INITIATIVE

In the next decade, there will be over 200,000 job openings in fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in Georgia with a significant lack of qualified applicants to fill them. Since 2011, Sandy Springs Education Force (SSEF), with program partner, Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), has produced a yearly community event focused on inspiring and engaging our students to pursue academics and careers in STEM-related fields. This event not only features cutting edge, hands-on exhibits, but also presents career options and a strong educational component linked to the academic curriculum. As of 2015, SSEF added a new element to STEM - the Arts. Arts education is a key to creativity, and creativity is an essential component of innovation which is necessary to create new industries for the future!

The Annual SSEF STEAM INITIATIVE is divided into four segments. First, innovative exhibits are presented during the school day at North Springs Charter High School to over 600 high school students. That evening, SSEF extends the exhibits along with a VIP Reception to community members and business and government leaders. The reception features a celebrity emcee and inspiring speakers. The event continues later in the month, as SSEF participates in the Riverwood Career Fair. SSEF brings exciting exhibits, the technical schools that train for these careers, and the companies that hire the trainees, in order to show students a direct route from education to career success. Finally, outreach programs and speakers are offered in all Sandy Springs Elementary and Middle School throughout the rest of the year.



One of the most important aspects of the SSEF's STEAM effort is that funds raised from sponsorships go to the schools in the form of grants for our STEAM clubs and projects. This allows our students to experience the excitement of Science, Technology, Engineering, Math - and the Arts - first hand. These student-clubs and projects then get the opportunity to present at the following year's STEAM VIP Reception.

The SSEF's STEM event has been recognized for its outstanding community impact. In 2013, 2014 and 2015 the event was nominated as a finalist for the Technology Association of Georgia's STEM Education Award for Extracurricular Programs. And, in 2014 and 2015, SSEF's STEM event was the winner of this prestigious award!

