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## **STEM exCEL Reopens as BSTEM Enrichment Center for Fairfax Youth**

**Fairfax City, VA** – STEM exCEL, a technology-based education program, announced the grand reopening of its Fairfax City technology education center, after a temporary closure due to the global pandemic. Now renamed as the BSTEM Enrichment Center, their mission is to inspire elementary-age students to embrace technology and encourage future professional fields by continuing its commitment to fostering a love for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (“STEM”) education throughout Northern Virginia. BSTEM is dedicated to building upon their reputation as a cornerstone in the Fairfax community. With a focus on fostering educational opportunities, the center employs over 50 George Mason University college students annually, actively participates in PTA afterschool programs at more than 30 elementary schools in Fairfax and organizes engaging summer camps and programs at its facility, including need-based scholarships.

Acknowledging the important academic opportunities created by STEM education in the workforce pipeline, the Fairfax City Economic Development Authority supported BSTEM’s reopening by authorizing a relocation incentive grant. This grant helps reinstate a valuable enterprise in Fairfax City that was forced to close during the earliest part of the pandemic. BSTEM’s decision to reopen in Fairfax City is notable and represented their commitment to succeeding in the center of Northern Virginia.

“We are so fortunate that Zachary Shelton decided to establish BSTEM here in Fairfax City. His assessment of what this educational experience will mean for young children, and also for the Mason University students who provide that instruction, is quite visionary. He has reimagined workforce development to play for the long game. The future is about teaching 21st century skills students can build upon and that mirrors our priorities here in the city,” said **Fairfax City Mayor Catherine Read**

“We are excited to announce the grand reopening of our Fairfax City location as the very first BSTEM Enrichment Center, pioneering Bitcoin technology and STEM for elementary enrichment education. We are proud to once again support the growth and development of our community through our Fairfax City center-based offerings and partnerships with local schools and organizations,” said **Zachary Shelton, Director of STEM exCEL and CEO of BSTEM.**

“By investing in the education and empowerment of our young minds, we are laying the groundwork for a prosperous future. With our assistance, the center was able to overcome the challenges presented by the pandemic and resume its essential role in the community. BSTEM’s commitment to technology-based education aligns perfectly with our vision for fostering innovation and growth in Fairfax City,” said **Kathleen Paley, Chair of the Fairfax City EDA.**

“The reopening of BSTEM is a significant milestone for us as we recognize the critical importance of building a skilled workforce from an early age. By nurturing a passion for STEM education in young

children, we are laying the foundation for a future generation of innovators, problem solvers, and leader,”  
**said Nicole Toulouse, Senior Assistant Director, Fairfax City Economic Development.**

For more information about BSTEM and their programs, please visit [www.stemexcel.org](http://www.stemexcel.org)

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**Fairfax City Economic Development** is a collaboration between the Fairfax City Economic Development Office and the Fairfax City Economic Development Authority, an independent agency administered by a commission appointed by the City Council to promote economic development activity within Fairfax. Fairfax City Economic Development helps attract businesses to the city, encourages and develops programs that foster connections between businesses, residents, and visitors of Fairfax, and spearheads innovative programs and strategies devoted to positioning Fairfax City as an ideal location to start, grow, and scale a business. It is a founding member of the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance.