

Media Opportunity

Senator Al Franken Speaks at Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Day at the State Fair

“Science, technology, engineering and math – the STEM fields – are going to be critical for our country’s future economic success.”

WHAT: STEM Day at the Minnesota State Fair
WHEN: OPENING DAY, August 26, 2010, 8:00am-5:00pm
WHERE: MN State Fairgrounds, Carousel Park
EVENT **Dr. Ronald J. Bennett, Executive Director**
SPOKESPERSON: MN Center for Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence
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MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERISTY, MANKATO – Senator Al Franken will speak at STEM Day at the Minnesota State Fair on Thursday, August 26, from 1:15 to 2:00PM. He will join more than 20 non-profit STEM exhibitors from across Minnesota to demonstrate the role of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to a robust Minnesota economy. Senator Franken is a member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and believes that science, technology, engineering and math – the STEM fields – are going to be critical for our country’s future economic success. He will begin the visit touring exhibitors’ booths and end with a brief address at approximately 1:50PM.

Organized by a group of committed volunteers from the MN Center for Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence Advisory Board, STEM Day at the Fair is the first event of its kind. Non-profits from throughout Minnesota are gathering together to show the importance and – fun – of STEM focus areas. With headlines full of social and environmental problems such as oil spills, global warming, world-wide economic recession and an aging population, solutions lie with people who have practical knowledge and training in science, technology, engineering and math. Minnesota and the U.S. needs more people to pursue STEM-related careers.

But media headlines are not the only reason for people to consider STEM-related careers. STEM education is critical for health care workers, nutritionists, educators, mechanics, IT professionals, analysts, and others who work in utilities, forestry or land management and agriculture, mining, and advanced manufacturing.

The National Science Foundation reported in 2004 that scientific innovation has produced roughly half of all U.S. economic growth in the last 50 years. And, various industry and government reports present a broad consensus that the number and quality of the workforce in the STEM fields is crucial to U.S. competitiveness in the global economy.

On STEM day, various exhibitors bring science, technology, engineering and math to daily life. Fairgoers won’t find any pocket protectors, hear any lectures or take any tests in Carousel Park, but they may witness an earthquake, test a rocket, or build a windmill. Highlights of STEM day include a MN State Fair computer application developed by Microsoft, the MN Planetarium’s ExploraDome, and the comedic antics of the U of M Physics Force show.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Minnesota Center for Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence www.mnceme.org

The Center for Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence is a consortium of academic institutions led by Minnesota State University, Mankato, with ten two-year colleges located throughout Minnesota. They include lead university Minnesota State University, Mankato, with Alexandria, Anoka and Hennepin technical colleges, Normandale Community College, South Central College and five colleges of the Northeast Higher Education District. The Center serves industry as a resource for continuing education, emerging technology and the development of future workers by promoting opportunities for students to pursue science, technology, engineering and math as career fields. The Center and its academic institutions are members of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. All are equal opportunity employers.

INDUSTRY SPONSORS

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IN-KIND SUPPORT

Minnesota High Tech Association/ www.mhta.org; Minnesota Precision and Manufacturing Association/ www.mpma.com ; and MN Department of Employment and Economic Development / www.positivelyminnesota.com

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STEM Minnesota / www.getstem-mn.com

STEM Occupations in Minnesota

www.positivelyminnesota.com/Data_Publications/Economic_Trends_Magazine/March_2009_Edition/STEM_Occupations_in_Minnesota.aspx

STEM Occupations: High-tech jobs for a high-tech economy

www.bls.gov/opub/oog/2007/spring/art04.pdf

U.S. Department of Labor www.dol.gov/dol/topic/statistics

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