FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Central Allegheny Challenger Learning Center Reaches Another Milestone

Concurrent Technologies Corporation Makes Memorial Donation Befitting Former Leader’s Passion for High-Tech Learning -- Gift Going to Unique STEM Program That Will Help Prepare Future Workforce

Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC) has remembered one of the company’s former leaders and mentors with a donation that honors her passion for high-tech education and training. On October 23, 2014, the CTC Foundation, an affiliate of CTC, presented a $5,000 check in memory of Dr. Linda A. Monzo to the Central Allegheny Challenger Learning Center (CACLC). When completed the CACLC will provide an exciting, applied learning environment using space as the theme and simulation as the method promoting science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) excellence.

Dr. Monzo had a significant influence on CTC employees through various leadership positions she held from 1996 until her retirement in 2008 and beyond, serving in a part-time advisory role until September 2013. She passed away March 20, 2014, after a long battle with cancer. Among her many impressive contributions to CTC, she established education and training program standards and assisted in defining those corporate initiatives. She also identified and developed major new CTC programs, including the Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Training. At one point in her CTC career, Dr. Monzo was responsible for operational management and strategic direction for more than 500 employees focused on research, development and integration of technologies. Her responsibilities eventually extended to contract performance, business development, human resources, financial performance, and organizational development. Before starting her work at CTC, Dr. Monzo was Assistant Principal and Principal at Greensburg Salem School District.

“We are very pleased to be able to honor Linda, as well as further CTC’s corporate commitment to preparing the future workforce, through a contribution to the Central Allegheny Challenger Learning Center, which contributes in a unique way to STEM education,” added Sheehan. “The CTC Foundation matched funds contributed in Linda’s name by the employees who benefited from her generous guidance and commitment to them and their professional development.”
The CACLC will be the first center in Pennsylvania, serving a 22-county region. At the Center, students will fly NASA-designed simulated missions in which they will be required to use the math and science skills they have learned in the classrooms. “The students will spend about 60 hours in their home school district classrooms preparing to fly one of four different missions,” said Walter A. Schroth the CACLC’s Interim Executive Director. “We have very high expectation of the students to meet the challenges of flying one of these very exciting missions.”

“In addition to using their basic math and science skills, the simulated missions are also designed to develop critical thinking and problem solving skill sets that are so necessary in today’s high tech world,” Schroth added.

“This is a terrific gift, we are really excited to be here today,” said Julia Trimarchi Cuccro, the Chair of the CACLC, adding “We are so pleased to see this kind of support coming from such high tech industry leaders as CTC!” Carol Fry, Director at the Indiana County Technology Center, echoed Ms. Trimarchi Cuccro’s excitement about the gift and praised the family and CTC’s leadership for their generous donation that will help move the project forward and perhaps inspire other organizations to support CACLC/STEM.

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**About Concurrent Technologies Corporation:**

CTC is an independent, nonprofit, applied scientific research and development professional services organization providing innovative management and technology-based solutions to government and industry. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, CTC's primary purpose and programs are to undertake applied scientific research and development activities that serve the public interest. For more information, visit [www.ctc.com](http://www.ctc.com). CTC established the CTC Foundation in 1998 to promote the application of innovative, scientific, technological and humanistic principles to enhance economic progress and the quality of life. For more information, visit [www.ctcfoundation.org](http://www.ctcfoundation.org).

**About The Central Allegheny Challenger Learning Center**

The Central Allegheny Challenger Learning Center will be located on the campus of the Indiana County Technology Center (ICTC). It will serve the students in a 22 county area surrounding Indiana County. The CACLC will perform a critical role in preparing our students for the workforce of the 21st century, especially in those early elementary and middle school years as it provides students with the motivation to pursue the high tech careers in the STEM fields either for ICTC’s SIFI program currently under development, or direct two and four technical programs. In addition to operating one or more of the potential four missions, Return to the Moon, Mission to Mars, Mission to a Comet and a low earth orbit mission centered on earth sciences, the CACLC will operate a Micronaught Area for grades K-3. For more information please visit: [www.pachallenger.org](http://www.pachallenger.org).

**About The Challenger Center for Space Science Education**

On January 28, 1986, the seven crew members of the Space Shuttle Challenger – *Mission STS-51L* “Teacher in Space” mission set out to broaden educational horizons and advance scientific knowledge. Their mission exemplified man’s noblest and most wondrous qualities – to explore, discover, and teach. To the nation’s shock and sorrow, their Space Shuttle was destroyed 73 seconds after liftoff.

In the aftermath of the Challenger accident, the crew’s families came together, firmly committed to the belief that they must carry on the spirit of their loved ones by continuing the Challenger crew’s educational mission. In April 1986, they created Challenger Center for Space Science Education.
They envisioned a place where children, teachers and citizens alike could touch the future: manipulate equipment, conduct experiments, solve problems, and work together-immersing themselves in space-like surroundings. The goal: to spark youth interest and joy in science and engineering; a spark that could change their lives. The result: the creation of a Challenger Learning Center.

Challenger Center for Space Science Education offers dynamic, hands-on exploration and discovery opportunities to students around the world. These programs give students the chance to become astronauts and engineers and solve real-world problems as they share the thrill of discovery on missions through the Solar System. Using space simulation and role-playing strategies, students bring their classroom studies to life and cultivate the skills needed for future success. Learning Centers reach into communities around the globe, engaging more than 400,000 middle school-age students and 40,000 educators each year. For more information, visit: www.challenger.org

About the STEM Institute for Future Innovators

Carol Fry, the Director of the Indiana County Technology Center, explained that the goal of the STEM Institute for Future Innovators (SIFI) is to create a seamless “pathway” of STEM learning from kindergarten through 12th grade. “The Challenger will serve our students in grades K-9 in early STEM learning, providing a hands-on and fun exposure to the applicability and relevance of science and math. SIFI will pick up from there, engaging our high school students in grades 10-12 in continuing STEM learning”. Fry added, “As educators and parents, our mandate needs to be to facilitate STEM literacy for all students and STEM expertise for many. With the shortage of students entering STEM careers and increased employment openings identified by business/industry, we want to close that gap by getting students excited about STEM careers through an interdisciplinary, applied learning environment. Rather than teach four disciplines--Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math—as separate and discrete subjects, STEM integrates them into a cohesive learning model based on real-world applications.” For more information, visit:

STEM Ed. In PA
http://francis.edu/uploadedFiles/Content/Home/About_Us/Outreach_Centers/Science_Outreach_Center/Past_Events/Ed%20Legge%20Central%20STEM%20BP%20061413.pdf,

NW PA STEM http://nwstem.com/