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New York City Mission Society to Launch the “Summer of STEM” for 1,000 Campers

– The centuries-old nonprofit is bringing STEM skills to the forefront of underserved communities in Harlem and the Bronx–

(New York, N.Y.) – Lions, tiger-lilies, and stairs, oh my!

What do they all have in common? They're all part of the Mission Society's Summer of STEM, in which 1,000 Power Academy campers will explore science, technology, engineering and math this summer. And these will be real world lessons - as they discover each new area of study, they'll travel out in the field across New York City to visit zoos, the Skyscraper Museum, botanical gardens and urban farms. Further, the organization is providing hands-on experiences for their campers including building habitats during ecology, planting seeds during botany and so much more.

The Harlem-based organization places a high-priority on exposing the communities they serve, largely underserved communities of color, to STEM skills like critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving in hopes their campers will show a higher interest in careers in STEM fields. Experts predict that science and engineering occupations will grow by 26% from 2010-2020, twice as fast as the overall job market during that period. Yet, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, while Black and Hispanics account for 11% and 14% of the overall U.S. employment, they comprise only 6% of STEM workers.

“We know that individuals of color are drastically underrepresented in the STEM fields today. So, we’re challenging the status quo by equipping the kids we serve with the right set of skills to be competitive in the growing STEM fields,” says Elsie McCabe Thompson, President of the New York City Mission Society. “The goal is for our campers to truly see STEM jobs as viable career options for them.”

This year’s Power Academy Summer Camp kicks off on July 5th. The 6-week program is capped off with two celebratory days: Cranium Crunch, at which campers show off what they’ve learned with performances and presentations, and Olympic Day taking place on August 8th at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx, where campers will take part in athletic activities and health-focused lessons.

Those interested in volunteering at Olympic Day should contact Aja Meeks at ameeks@nycmissionsociety.org.

About Power Academy Summer Camp

The Mission Society’s Power Academy program has been the cornerstone of our mission to offer disadvantaged youth the highest quality educational support and enrichment. Operating at five New York City public elementary school sites and one community center Power Academy and Power Academy Summer Day Camp provide more than 1,000 children with academic support, cultural enrichment, and healthy recreational activities year-round.

About New York City Mission Society

The New York City Mission Society has been on the frontlines of the war on poverty for more than 200 years. Today, our progressive portfolio of educational, workforce development, cultural enrichment, and community-building programs, make a positive, long-term impact on the City's most underserved communities by promoting academic achievement, and providing career opportunities and cultural enrichment. Each year, we serve more than 13,000 children and families throughout New York City with our programs, supportive services, and community events. Learn more at www.nycmissionsociety.org.

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