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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connecticut Science Center Honors the 2020 STEM Achievement Award Winners

The Science Center honored Jacquelynn Garofano, Ph.D., Carmen R. Cid, Ph.D., The Hartford, and the Cognizant U.S. Foundation for their work

October 20, 2020 – Hartford, CT – The Connecticut Science Center is recognizing individual and corporate science champions with its 2020 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Achievement Awards and the Petit Family Foundation Women in Science Leadership Award.

The STEM Achievement Awards, sponsored by Stanley Black & Decker, celebrate the achievements of professionals, groups, advocates, businesses, and leaders who share the Science Center's STEM education mission. This year's individual honoree was Carmen R. Cid, Ph.D., the Dean, Arts and Sciences, Eastern Connecticut State University. This year's organizational honorees were The Hartford and the Cognizant U.S. Foundation.

The Petit Family Foundation Women in Science Leadership Award recognizes a woman working in STEM who is a leader in her field and who makes a significant effort to support other women and encourage girls' interests in STEM. This year's honoree is Jacquelynn Garofano, Ph.D, who is the Margaret Ingels Engineering Development Program Manager at Raytheon Technologies.

"It is fitting to highlight and honor the tireless work of Dr. Cid, Dr. Garofano, The Hartford, and the Cognizant U.S. Foundation at such a crucial time for science awareness, engagement and leadership," said the Connecticut Science Center's President & CEO Matt Fleury. "These incredible leaders and organizations share in a mission to inspire the next generation of STEM professionals and, in particular, to address the shortage of diversity in these fields. We are proud to recognize them and call them allies in this pursuit."



Carmen R. Cid, Ph.D. is the 2020 STEM Achievement Award Individual Honoree. She is the Dean, Arts and Sciences, Eastern Connecticut State University. She is the founding chair of the Women and Minorities in Ecology Committee for the Ecological Society of America (ESA), the largest professional organization for ecologists. In this role, Dr. Cid led the development of the first blueprint for establishing the committee infrastructure and strategic planning initiatives to improve recruitment, retention and career development for women and minorities in ecology (the WAMIE I report). Over the last two decades, she worked to set and accomplish many goals to enhance ESA diversity and ecological literacy initiatives. Her most significant achievement includes the establishment of the SEEDS award-winning mentoring programs for minority undergraduates (<https://esa.org/seeds/>) and the development of many society initiatives to improve career

development of early career ecologists, along with establishment of society-endorsed undergraduate ecology education standards (www.esa.org/4dee).

The Hartford and the **Cognizant U.S. Foundation** are this year's STEM Achievement Award Organization Honoree. Among their philanthropic funding priorities, The Hartford and Cognizant U.S. Foundation have elevated STEM, STEM education, and STEM workforce development as a primary point of focus of their efforts. Both organizations have – on their own – funded initiatives and provided extensive volunteer support for these efforts. In 2019, they came together in an unprecedented partnership to fund the STEM Career Connections initiative at the Connecticut Science Center. STEM Career Connections is a comprehensive initiative designed to inspire students to consider futures in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). It represents a deepening commitment to the illumination of STEM opportunities and pathways available in Connecticut. The program aims to develop team-oriented thinkers, innovators, and communicators by integrating STEM-related career content into our programs, exhibits, and events, fueling a diverse and successful STEM workforce for the next generation. Animated by the vision of what we could achieve together, these two organizations took a risk of energy, time, and capital to launch a new and – at the time – unproven program. Because of their energy, philanthropy, vision, and effort, this program was not only launched but has begun to thrive. It has reached over 90,000 individuals through the Live Gallery Science Program, over 1600 students through the STEM Career Showcase, and many more through outreach and teacher training.



Jacquelynn Garofano, Ph.D is the 2020 Petit Family Foundation Women in Science Leadership Award Honoree. Dr. Garofano knows firsthand the power of mentorship and networking. She is a true STEMInist. She feels incredibly fortunate to have had mentors who encouraged and supported her career and works to give back by creating opportunities for a diverse workforce. As a first-generation college graduate, she knows the challenges that one must overcome. She is an active member of the Society of Women Engineers and was a 2018 Future is NOW awardee by the CT Women's Education and Legal Fund for her work to advance women and girls in STEM fields. Her passion is being the catalyst that will help set others on a STEM path, igniting their love of STEM and education.

With strong alumni connections to SCSU and UCONN, she seeks out opportunities to share her journey and encourage women to join in her work. Because “see her, be her” is a concept that animates her, she knows that sharing these stories will lead to greater diversity and an increase in women in the sciences. She has participated in panel sessions, science fairs, and outreach events and even serves as a community leader for United Way & Women United. To Garofano, these are platforms to advocate for women and girls in STEM. She strives to be someone young students, especially those in under-served communities, can look to and encourage with “you can do anything you set your mind to!”

The awards were celebrated at the Connecticut Science Center's 2020 Green Gala, a star-studded virtual event that event engaged hundreds of supporters, sponsors, and science lovers from Connecticut and across the country to support the Science Center's vital mission to inspire lifelong learning through interactive and innovative experiences that explore our changing world through science. Lead sponsors of the Green Gala this year were Harvest Investments and Travelers.

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About the Connecticut Science Center The LEED-Gold certified Connecticut Science Center, located in downtown Hartford, sparks creative imagination and an appreciation for science by immersing visitors in fun and educational hands-on, minds-on interactive experiences while maintaining an environmentally conscious presence. Serving more than 2.5 million people since opening in 2009, the Science Center features more than 165 exhibits in ten galleries and a range of topics, including space and earth sciences, physical sciences, biology, the Connecticut River

watershed, alternative energy sources, Connecticut inventors and innovations, a children's gallery, and much more. Other features include four educational labs, a 200-seat 3D digital theater, a function room, a gift store, and ongoing events for all ages. The Science Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing science education throughout the state of Connecticut and New England, providing learning opportunities for students and adults of all ages, and engaging the community in scientific exploration. The Connecticut Science Center is also the home of the Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Academy for Teachers, offering powerful professional development for educators. More information: CTScienceCenter.org or 860.SCIENCE.