New Youth STEM Center Opens Door in Baltimore

Islamic Leadership Institute of America (ILIA) Announces the Launch of Bmore STEAM empowering Baltimore Communities through Innovative Learning

BALTIMORE, MD, UNITED STATES, January 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Islamic Leadership Institute of America (ILIA) is proud to announce the official launch of its highly needed STEM Center, dedicated to fostering innovation, cultural relevance, and accessibility in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, with focus on leadership development. This center will provide programming, mentorship, and hands-on learning experiences for youth coupled with leadership development.

Bmore STEAM Overview = STEM + Leadership Program

The STEM Center's mission is to equip young learners with the skills and confidence to succeed in STEM fields while celebrating cultural heritage, diversity and identity building. With a focus on advanced disciplines like Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics and cybersecurity.

> ILIA's STEM Center is more than an educational space—it's a hub for creativity, collaboration, and community empowerment"
>
> *Shane Ford*

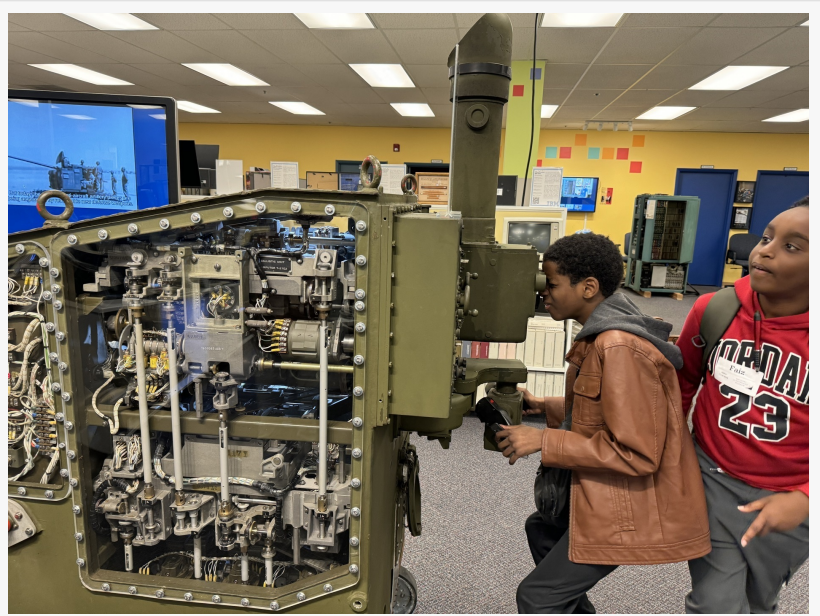Bmore STEAM Center is more than an educational space—it's a hub for creativity, collaboration, and community empowerment, as well as a safe space for youth to discover their passions, build confidence, and develop critical problem-solving skills. We are thrilled to offer an inclusive environment where students and families can explore the possibilities of STEM while honoring their cultural identities.

Membership options, financial aid, and scholarships will ensure that the center is accessible to all, with programming that ranges from basic hands-on workshops to advanced mentorship opportunities.

Some of the features of Bmore STEAM include innovative workshops and projects, employer visits, field trips, community-based projects, cultural integration, affordable memberships, financial aid and scholarships to ensure inclusivity, and leadership development integration.

Youth Field Trips

[Volunteer Opportunities](#) exist for youth ages 16+ in areas of engineering, cybersecurity, AI, food security and more. Bmore STEAM is partially funded by Baltimore Children & Youth Fund, as part of their Grassroots program, under the Culturally Sustaining theme at Islamic Leadership Institute of America. It is primarily a program to instill career and professional development soft skills and a strong positive identity within young people.

"Studying artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and advanced science topics is especially important for middle and high school youth in low-income and disadvantaged communities, as it helps bridge the widening digital divide", stated Ayman Nassar, founder and Chief Empowerment Officer at ILIA. The digital divide refers to the gap between those with easy access to technology and the internet and those who are disadvantaged in this area, often due to economic constraints. As technology continues to play an ever-growing role in every aspect of life, not learning these crucial topics exponentially increases the digital divide. Without exposure to AI, cybersecurity, and science, students in low-income areas risk being left behind in an increasingly tech-driven world, limiting their career opportunities and economic mobility. Learning these advanced subjects can equip them with skills necessary to excel in high-demand, high-paying fields, empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and providing them with the tools to succeed in a competitive job market.

Moreover, introducing AI, cybersecurity, and science topics to disadvantaged students allows them to become active participants in the technology landscape, rather than passive consumers. The ability to navigate and understand the digital world, as well as safeguard it through cybersecurity knowledge, ensures these youth are not only consumers of technology but also contributors and innovators. Not equipping youth with these skills further entrenches the digital divide, leaving them without the expertise to create or protect the technologies that shape society. By providing access to these subjects, we ensure that students are not just learning for

academic achievement but are also positioning themselves as future leaders in solving the world's most pressing problems through technology.

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) has consistently highlighted the importance of reducing the digital divide and improving access to STEM education. A number of reports by the Brookings Institution also found that exposure to STEM subjects, including AI and cybersecurity, can dramatically improve educational and economic outcomes for youth from underrepresented communities. These and similar studies provide a solid foundation for the importance of providing equitable access to advanced educational topics in technology.

Bmore STEAM has several advantages over school-based STEM programs, particularly for students from low-income or disadvantaged backgrounds. From flexibility, and personalization to after-school hours, professional networking, cultural integration, and leadership integration. Bmore STEAM is open year-round, providing more opportunities for continuous learning and hands-on experiences, and has a vast network of 100+ scientists, engineers, STEAM leaders and specialists in various areas of technology and science.

From among recent field trips the youth experienced a day visit to NASA's labs and testing units, a cataract surgery at John's Hopkins University, a medical research lab at University of Maryland School of Medicine, and a manufacturing plant at Becton Dickson. Parents interested in enrolling their children can visit http://bmoresteam.org

About Islamic Leadership Institute of America (ILIA)

ILIA is a 501c(3) nonprofit, dedicated to youth development and leadership education across America. Our mission is to inspire and nurture youth leaders, empowering them to address community needs through experiential programs, self-initiated projects, and impactful contributions. Over the years we touched the lives of over 6,000+ youth from diverse backgrounds and partnered with 200+ organizations in the public, nonprofit and private sectors. To learn more about ILIA, visit us at https://www.islamicleadership.org

About Baltimore Children & Youth Fund (BCYF)

In the effort to create a dedicated fund to support programs for Baltimore's young people, BCYF was launched in 2015 by then-City Council President Bernard "Jack" C. Young in response to the unrest in Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody, an event that sharply illuminated longstanding inequities in public funding in Black communities. BCYF builds partnerships that support the ecosystem focused on opportunities for Baltimore youth by providing support to leaders and organizations. To learn more visit https://bcyfund.org

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