

Press release
Calculus Roundtable
December 1, 2021
Richmond, CA

Lawrence Livermore Helps Innovative BioMed Program in the Eastbay

Calculus Roundtable announced a generous grant from the Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Laboratory today in support of their innovative 'BLOC by Block' Program - a biomedical science program launching in January. 'BLOC by Block' will help underserved kids and students of color gain knowledge and access to the biomedical industry and higher-level science jobs around the Bay.

Calculus Roundtable has received pledged time from groups like Biopharma Leaders of Color (BLOC) who have helped to build a set of courses that mixes DNA research, engineering, programming, biology, and career exploration with scientists, geneticists, doctors, and medical engineers of color.

The 'BLOC by Block' launched in Richmond, Oakland, and San Jose. Carl Davis Jr, President of the California Chambers of Commerce calls 'BLOC by Block', "The most impactful STEM programs for underserved communities in California".

Whether discovering new gene therapy treatments or teaching healthy lifestyle choices to their communities, today's biomedical science professionals are tackling significant challenges to make the world a better place.

Calculus Roundtable Biomedical Science students are taking on these same real-world challenges – and they're doing it even before they leave middle school. Working with the same tools used by professionals in hospitals and labs, Calculus Roundtable gives students and their volunteer mentors a series of engaging, compelling, hands-on activities they work through together to find solutions to real and imagined problems.

"Our approach to teaching is working inside-out ", says Calculus Roundtable's Executive Director, Jim Hollis. "That is, taking what excites students in the classroom and having them experience it in the outside world inspiring the next generation of scientists. This gift from Lawrence Livermore allows us to purchase the equipment needed to make science come alive for kids."

The program featuring volunteer scientist geneticist and biomedical industry professionals helps to inspire young people with the insights and academic support they'll need in the fast-growing world of biomedicine. Participants gain a deeper understanding and importance of innovation, the scientific method but most importantly believing in themselves to achieve whatever they set out as their goal.

Currently, several pilot programs have begun in anticipation of the official launch. Students in several Richmond and Oakland schools have spent the past several months testing the curriculum that extends the gambit from DNA extraction from strawberries to building a working EKG monitor using a simple programming language called Scratch and a programmable circuit board an Arduino.

Calculus Roundtable curriculum developers work with industry biomedical and pharmaceutical leaders to develop science experiments for students that meet the core curriculum standards for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. So as Hollis states, "nothing is cut from what they're already learning, but so much more is gained from the added experiences. " Early signs suggest the Biomedical community agrees.

Tunde Bello, Vice President, of Clinical Pharmacology and Pharmacometrics at Bristol Meyers Squibb, and a member of the company's Black Organization for Leadership and Development employee group (BOLD) said of the program, "This type of outreach is a gateway to establishing solid support systems for cultivating talent. If we enrich STEM curricula in a meaningful way, we can encourage more people in historically excluded communities to choose a STEM career, thereby building a better, more diverse workforce."

For more information contact: gabriella@calcround.org or dial 510-316-6084