

THE PETER AND ELSA SODERBERG FOUNDATION

Strategic Initiative: Towards STEM-ming the Tide

One of the Soderberg Foundation's primary areas of focus is to seek and help catalyze **New and Scalable Paradigms in Primary and Secondary School STEM Education** in partnership with school systems and other organizations with similar interests.

Our career in industry and our travels globally convince us that the U.S. has fallen significantly behind in preparing its children for 21st century careers. We are convinced that the bulk of our graduates will ultimately compete poorly with other young adults from developed and developing countries for higher paying jobs requiring competency in Science, Technology, Engineering and/or Math.

Call to Action... The Evidence

- **Global Competitiveness:** In the 2009 Program for International Student Assessment, American 15 year olds ranked globally 17th in Science and 25th in Math. The Center for American Progress pointed out that “between 2000 and 2008, China graduated 1.14 million people in the STEM, or Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, subjects; the United States graduated 496,000.”
- **Employment Opportunities:** According to Change the Equation, there are 3.6 unemployed workers for every job in the United States. That compares with only one unemployed STEM worker for two unfilled STEM jobs throughout the country. Even with more than 13 million Americans unemployed, the manufacturing sector cannot find people with the skills to take nearly 600,000 unfilled jobs, according to a study last fall by the Manufacturing Institute and Deloitte.
- **Compensation:** A report last October from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce found that 65 percent of those with Bachelors' degrees in STEM fields earn more than Master's degrees in non-STEM occupations. In fact, 47 percent of Bachelor's degrees in STEM occupations earn more than PhDs in non-STEM occupations.
- **Attitude and Aptitude:** But despite the lucrative potential, many young people are reluctant to enter into fields that require a background in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. In a recent study by the Lemelson-MIT Invention Index, which gauges innovation aptitude among young adults, 60 percent of young adults (ages 16 to 25) named at least one factor that prevented them from pursuing further education or work in the STEM fields. Thirty-four percent said they don't know much about the fields, a third said they were too challenging, and 28 percent said they were not well-prepared at school to seek further education in these areas.
- **Skills:** According to the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 35% of eighth graders performed at grade level or above in math.

Criteria for Support from the Peter and Elsa Soderberg Foundation

We seek to engage in collaborative philanthropy with leadership, investments, network leverage and strategic grants through charitable organizations that build responsibility, vibrancy and sustainability into our targeted community. To work with us, we ideally seek partners and projects which:

- 1. Have been given tax exempt status [501(c)(3)] by the Internal Revenue Service**
- 2. Are not for:**
 - a. endowment funds**
 - b. individuals**
 - c. loan purposes**
 - d. religious groups**
 - e. political groups**
 - f. sponsorships for fund-raising events**
- 3. Share our vision and goals, and can work collaboratively with us to achieve successful outcomes over agreed upon and realistic time frames and milestones**
- 4. Have potential to be successfully scaled beyond the initial, proof-of-principle project**
- 5. Are compelling enough to attract other organizations and charitable funding**
- 6. Have leadership who exhibit the passion, commitment and competence to achieve project goals**

Contact Information:

Peter and Elsa Soderberg

peterhsoderberg@wvrlc.com

Cell: 315-664-0467

elsa.soderberg@welchallyn.com

Cell: 315-364-3664

P.O. Box 1287

255 Whiskey Row

Boca Grande, FL 33921-1287

Home: 941-855-9140