

New STEM Volunteer Opportunity

Interested in helping Cambridge middle school students learn genetics through a cool computer game?

Become a GeniConnect Coach

What is the GeniConnect project?

GeniConnect is a National Science Foundation-funded collaboration among East End House, Concord Consortium, and Purdue University.

The GeniConnect project's central goal is to develop and research a program for afterschool students involving game-based learning, coaching by scientists, and hands-on laboratory work in biotechnology and genetics. Afterschool students will navigate through Geniverse, a web-based environment to support student learning of genetics. In Geniverse, students dive into genetics using a virtual model species to explore the fundamental mechanisms of heredity and genetic diseases while also getting a taste of careers in genetics.

The goal of connecting students with industry professionals as Coaches is to foster meaningful relationships, promote student understanding of key concepts in genetics and connections to real-world applications, and to expand student awareness of workforce activities and skills.



For more information and/or to apply to be a GeniConnect coach, contact Giovanna:

giovanna@eastendhouse.org
617-876-4444

What is a GeniConnect Coach?

Professionals and graduate students with experience in biology, genetics, and/or biotechnology who would be willing to spend a few hours over an 8-week period meeting with middle school students in their afterschool program in the Cambridge area.

Coaches will:

- Play Geniverse with students in the afterschool setting
- Help students make direct connections from the game to real-world genetics and their hands-on laboratory experiences.
- Engage with students in planned project activities such as an introductory group dinner and an optional field trip to a local biotech company.
- Reflect with students on project activities through virtual laboratory tours and the regular exchange of "video postcards."

The Commitment:

- Orientation/Training event
- Fall 2016 session: 2, 1-hour sessions per week for 4 weeks
- Spring 2017 session: 1, 1-hour session per week for 8 weeks
- Engage in exchanging "virtual postcards" with students



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STEM Volunteer Description

Organizational Background

East End House community center uses a holistic approach to promote the well-being, academic achievement, and successful transition to adulthood of children and youth from under-resourced families in Cambridge and surrounding communities. As part of this approach, East End House provides support services to a diverse population, from infants to seniors, to strengthen family and community.

Position Summary

We rely on volunteers to help us provide the highest quality services and create the most innovative and relevant programming we can. There are opportunities for individuals, families and groups with varied interests and skills for long term or one-time events, and fit into most schedules. STEM Volunteers will contribute to East End House's School Age and Middle School Programs by connecting with children and youth during out-of-school-time (OST) hours. As professionals or students from the STEM sector, STEM Volunteers will share their knowledge, interest, and work with young people between the hours of 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm during the school year and 9:00 am and 5:00 pm during summer months,

Purpose

To connect children and youth with "real life" scientists and STEM professionals in their neighborhood. To excite young people about learning STEM, teach them the many professions that are part of STEM fields, and inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, and mathematicians.

Requirements

- Must be passionate about Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Math
- Must be interested in helping, connecting with, and inspiring children
- Must complete a volunteer application and background check (CORI)

Roles and Requirements

STEM Volunteers can participate in one or many of the following ways:

- Visit afterschool STEM classes for students in the School Age Program (grades K-5) or the Middle School Program (grades 6-8); participate in curriculum written by East End House staff members; contribute knowledge and engage young people in experiments, hands-on activities, exploration, and conversation.
- Visit the School Age or Middle School Program as a Guest Speaker; share information about the Volunteer's STEM work, study, or interests; engage young people in hands-on activities that help them learn the Volunteer's work; if possible, link the Volunteer's presentation to curriculum in the afterschool program.
- Host a group of students at a lab, workplace, or classroom; give a tour of the space and the work that is done there; if possible, engage young people in a hands-on activity that demonstrates the STEM work of the lab or classroom.
- Contribute knowledge to Group Leaders as they write and plan curriculum; be available via phone or email to share STEM knowledge with youth development workers who write curriculum in Life Science, Physical Sciences, and Earth and Space Science.

Contact **Giovanna Castro Matos**
Community Programs Coordinator,
(617) 876-4444 or giovanna@eastendhouse.org

We look forward to working with you!

