

For Immediate Release

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## **INNOVATIVE MINORITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MODEL GARNERS MAJOR BACKING FROM GOOGLE, DUPONT, GEORGIA TECH**

*L.E.A.D. Program Modifies Corporate Diversity Strategy to Stimulate Engineering Sector*

Philadelphia, PA - April 24 - In response to volumes of research demonstrating pervasive math and science illiteracy in the United States, especially among minorities, the LEAD (Leadership Education and Development) Program today announced the launch of the LEAD Summer Engineering Institute (SEI) for academically strong high school students of color. The program will launch at Georgia Institute of Technology in summer 2008.

The announcement comes amid urgent calls to boost STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) performance among American students. A 2005 study by the National Academy of Engineering Committee on Diversity in the Engineering Workforce (CDEW) predicted disaster if the country does not change course, stating “our nation’s health, economy, security and leadership are at peril unless the entire population becomes more technologically literate.”

The CDEW study also confirmed that minority student outcomes are at great risk; despite nationwide allocation of funding and other resources for K-12 STEM programs, “a very small proportion” finds its way to underrepresented populations.

LEAD’s entry into engineering follows nearly three decades of facilitating successful collaborations between minority high school students, corporations and universities at LEAD Summer Business Institutes (SBIs). Over 7,500 academically strong youth of color have studied at LEAD’s SBIs, located at 11 of the nation’s top business schools, including Wharton, Tuck, Kellogg and Stanford University. The program is highly competitive and receives three times the number of qualified applicants it can accommodate.

LEAD President and CEO Richard Ramsey believes the SBI framework is easily adapted to engineering and direly needed. “We are encouraged by the successes of several programs that target minority students for STEM immersion,” said Ramsey. “The present challenge is to make this movement as far-reaching as possible and we believe LEAD’s framework is the best means of profoundly influencing the educational and professional choices made by minority students.”

The inaugural SEI at Georgia Tech will host 30 students this summer for a three-week residency. “Despite efforts to improve the public’s understanding of engineering, studies show that K-12 students generally do not have a clear understanding about what engineers do,” said Don P. Giddens, dean of Georgia Tech’s College of Engineering. “Exposing high school students to exciting and innovative

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experiences through programs like the LEAD Summer Engineering Institute will serve to inspire and attract young people to future careers in engineering.”

Additional SEI campuses will be announced as they are confirmed. SEI curriculum will focus on electrical, mechanical, computer and civil engineering; associated disciplines such as chemical, biotech, biomolecular, materials science, aerospace, polymer-textile/fiber, and technological systems will also be studied.

The success of LEAD’s SBIs has made it an attractive partner for companies that recognize the potential in uniting students, academic professionals and corporations. Google Inc., the internet search engine, signed on early in LEAD Engineering’s sponsor search process with a \$1.27M pledge in support of the program. By offering use of their campus for skills development and training with employees, Google hopes to play a deliberate role in helping the SEI programs flourish. “Google is proud to be partnering with LEAD on our shared goal of advancing women and minorities in the field of computer science,” said Alan Eustace, Senior Vice President of Engineering and Research. “Programs like this help in dismantling barriers that keep minorities from entering engineering and allow them to excel, bringing a more diverse array of perspectives, ideas, and cultures to computer science.”

DuPont Engineering, part of DuPont - the science-based products and services company - has also signed on as a LEAD Engineering sponsor, committing to supporting the first three years of the SEI rollout. James B. Porter, Jr., DuPont’s Chief Engineer and Vice President - Engineering and Operations, said his company is “very excited about the opportunity to offer engineering curriculum to young students of color. High school is the ideal time to introduce students to engineering careers by challenging them with hands-on lab experiences and team-based project work. LEAD will also offer examples of successful industry professionals whom the students can shadow.”

For its first summer, LEAD Engineering will focus on tenth grade students, split evenly by gender. Summer 2009 will be a continuation of studies for the students and take place on the same campuses launched in 2008. The overall SEI rollout will include the launch of four additional program locations in 2009 and an increase of two programs each summer from 2010 through 2012. LEAD executives are currently meeting with administrators at additional top 50 engineering programs to determine partners for 2009 and 2010.

**About LEAD (Leadership Education and Development)**

Founded in 1980, the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program is a national partnership of top U.S. corporations and graduate business schools that encourages talented students from diverse backgrounds to pursue careers in business. Since 1980, LEAD’s prestigious Summer Business Institutes have graduated more than 7,500 students, 65 percent of whom currently work in the business world. For more information, visit [www.leadprogram.org](http://www.leadprogram.org)

**About the Georgia Institute of Technology**

The Georgia Institute of Technology is one of the nation's premiere research universities. Ranked seventh among *U.S. News & World Report's* top public universities, Georgia Tech’s more than 18,000 students are enrolled in its Colleges of Architecture, Computing, Engineering, Liberal Arts, Management and Sciences. Tech is among the nation's top producers of women and African-American engineers. The Institute offers research opportunities to both undergraduate and graduate students and is home to more than 100 interdisciplinary units plus the Georgia Tech Research Institute. For more information, visit [www.gatech.edu](http://www.gatech.edu).