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NEW EXHIBIT FEATURING LOCAL WOMEN IN STEM CAREERS OPENS IN SCI-TECH DISCOVERY CENTER IN FRISCO

Five local women are featured in a new exhibit and educational program of Sci-Tech Discovery Center in Frisco that is designed to inspire girls to see themselves in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers. Ms. Kalika Dennis of The Colony - Cybersecurity Risk Analyst at Thomson Reuters, Dr. Lily Jiang of Plano - Chief Clinical Scientist at SGS Stephens; Ms. Sylvia Gonzalez of Frisco - Civil Engineer at BGE; Dr. Mary Roby of Plano - Electrical Engineer and Fabrication Lab Manager at TI; and Dr. Lara Ashmore of Carrollton - Technology Project Manager, participated in the project for Sci-Tech entitled "Picture Yourself in STEM".

With support from the Association of Science & Technology Centers and the IF/THEN® Initiative of Lyda Hill Philanthropies, Sci-Tech created an experience that includes video interviews with these five local women STEM professionals who share their own career inspirations and explain their fields of work. The exhibit also provides opportunities to strike a pose with a STEM career, take a quiz to compare characteristics with the five women, and try career-related hands-on activities at the adjacent Maker Studio.

Since the exhibit development began in February when many offices were closed the participants filmed themselves with a sanitized kit that Sci-Tech dropped off and picked up from their homes. Exhibit and Visitor Experience Director Rob Gilmore thanked the five project ambassadors, "Our participants were extremely flexible and generous with their time. I believe they appreciated the opportunity to inspire girls to see themselves in STEM careers."

Executive Director Janet Madrazo explained the impetus for the exhibit: "Research shows that students at age 13 who aspire to earn college degrees in STEM fields are significantly more likely to do so, and Sci-Tech Discovery Center aims to inspire the next generation of scientists and innovators by sparking interest in STEM subjects and providing active learning opportunities we call mind-stretching fun®. We are excited and grateful for the support we received to create this exhibit and also be able to share the videos and activities with our off-site programs that primarily serve students in economically disadvantaged areas of North Texas."

Sci-Tech was one of 27 Association of Science and Technology Centers members that were awarded grants earlier this year in the second round of IF/THEN® Gender Equity Grants through the support of Lyda Hill Philanthropies. The grants supported member museums as they embark on projects to increase the representation of women and gender minorities in STEM across museum content. Lyda Hill Philanthropies is the same organization that provided support for the #IfThenSheCan-The Exhibit of orange 3-D printed statues of 100 women in STEM that is on display at Northpark Center through October.