



MEDIA CONTACT
Mary Meluso
201.253.1335 | mmeluso@lsc.org

STRICTLY UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL TUESDAY, AUGUST 16 at 9:00AM

BANK OF AMERICA PARTNERS WITH LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER'S SCITECH SCITY ON "HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE" PROGRAM TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR CYBERSECURITY CAREERS

Initiative Part of LSC / Bank of America Partnership to Enhance Skills and Job Readiness in 'New Collar' STEM Fields, with Particular Focus on Students in Low-Income Communities

JERSEY CITY, N.J., August 16, 2022 – In the past two years, a series of massive cyberattacks has exposed the sensitive personal data of millions of Americans and cost the federal government, Fortune 500 corporations, non-governmental organizations, and other entities billions of dollars in lost revenue and productivity, while significantly disrupting the nation's food supply, oil pipeline, energy infrastructure, and other necessary operations.

The need for well-educated and highly skilled cybersecurity professionals to mitigate and combat these and future threats has never been more imperative. Yet, there is a significant dearth of trained individuals to meet this urgency; there are some 500,000 unfilled cybersecurity jobs in the United States, and more than four million globally.

While a number of prestigious universities such as MIT, University of Pennsylvania, and Arizona State University have recently created baccalaureate, graduate, and professional education programs to fill the tremendous need, Liberty Science Center's SciTech Scity in Jersey City and Bank of America are taking an innovative approach: They are reaching into the high school ranks.

Indeed, as part of a comprehensive effort to improve the future of high school education and enrich the future of work in the state and region, LSC and BofA are announcing today a two-year pilot program in two New Jersey high schools – James J. Ferris High School in Jersey City and Memorial High School in West New York – focused on providing their students with the skills and training needed to prepare them for what have been termed "new collar" jobs, those in emerging technology fields. The initial focus will be on cybersecurity, and jobs in cybersecurity that don't require extensive coding skills.

The High Schools of the Future pilot will allow MHS and Ferris HS students entering 11th grade this fall to opt into an accelerated, two-year professional job training program to build their STEM skills and job readiness through school year programming and summer experiences. The two-year pilot will serve 20-30 students from each school and aim to teach them career-ready skills that are highly valuable for high-earning careers and the rapidly developing STEM labor markets. Additionally, those students who successfully complete these accelerated learning paths, and meet their conditions for employment, will be offered quality jobs at BofA as employees focused on emerging technologies.

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Convening industry representatives with thought leaders, educators, and other stakeholders to address societal issues and make the world a better place is a primary focus of the 30-acre SciTech Scity innovation campus currently being developed by LSC in Jersey City. The High Schools of the Future advisory panel was assembled to address the issue of workforce readiness and is made up of experienced classroom educators, academics who study workforce trends, and industry representatives responsible for job training. The panel worked for 18 months on this pilot in an effort to ensure high school students would be prepared for emerging jobs and the future of work.

Liberty Science Center is currently in the process of identifying key professional job partners and skill needs, developing curriculum, and establishing training protocols. In addition to cybersecurity, other areas that have already been identified for training include the financial service industry and the energy industry.

“Since our inception more than 25 years ago, one of our primary goals has been to be a catalyst for improved student STEM learning in New Jersey’s most underserved communities,” said Paul Hoffman, LSC President and CEO. “This goal is more urgent than ever because the pandemic has unfortunately deepened educational disparities between the state’s lowest-income neighborhoods and better resourced areas.”

Hoffman added that, “LSC is ready to respond to a critical need for enhanced jobs-readiness training for high school students, helping them attain STEM skills that will enable them to get jobs upon graduation if they choose to enter the workforce. And with the plethora of malware, ransomware, phishing attacks and other cyberattacks surging and negatively impacting so many individuals, companies and organizations here in the U.S. and across the globe, the pilot program in cybersecurity is a natural first step in fulfilling this mission.”

Hoffman noted there are well more than a half-million unfilled cybersecurity jobs in the U.S. and more than four million globally. Those numbers are expected to continue to grow exponentially – the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that “information security analyst” will be the 10th fastest growing occupation over the next decade, with an employment growth rate of 31% (compared to the 4% average growth rate for all occupations).

“Here in New Jersey, there are 1.4 open STEM jobs for every unemployed person. Supporting the Liberty Science Center on the High Schools of the Future initiative is another way we’re helping to prepare a diverse pipeline of students to be successful in STEM careers,” said Alberto Garofalo, Bank of America New Jersey President. “Simply put, more STEM jobs exist than there are qualified candidates to fill them. Our goals in partnering with Liberty Science Center on the High Schools of the Future initiative include addressing minority scholarship, professional training programs, and curriculum building to help ensure student success while also uplifting underserved communities through workforce development.”

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Deneen Alford, principal of Ferris High School, said she was excited about the partnership, noting that, "According to the National Center for Education Statistics, young adults with bachelor's or higher degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) tend to have more positive economic outcomes. However, the percentage of Hispanic, Pacific Island, and African American students with STEM degrees tends to be much lower than other races/ethnicities. My student population at James J Ferris High School is very diverse. My goal is to create well-rounded citizens with a social conscience that enables them to serve the community and meet the challenges of an ever-changing world."

Clara Brito Herrera, Superintendent of West New York Schools, echoed these sentiments, explaining that, "The West New York School District is committed to inspiring students and providing them with the skills necessary to fill the careers of the 21st century. This partnership is a great opportunity for our students pursuing careers in this emerging STEM job market."

Liberty Science Center and SciTech Scity are seeking other high-employment companies in New Jersey to join Bank of America in the High Schools of the Future initiative. Corporate partnerships will enhance high school training in order to:

- Improve **job readiness** of students, particularly those from underserved communities, in a rapidly changing working world
- **Offer meaningful job opportunities** with transferable skills upon graduation and successful completion of the program
- Pilot two schools **with the goal of developing a STEM job-readiness program that can be scaled up to other high schools across New Jersey and even the rest of the country.**

Hoffman explained that LSC is obtaining commitments from New Jersey companies to offer jobs to students who successfully complete the program. This, he stresses, will be "a win for the students, their families, and for the companies who save on recruiting and training costs."

In addition to the pilot program announced today, the preliminary High Schools of the Future advisory panel discussions have included the need to equip students who may decide to continue their formal education while working and also the need for programs that ensure life-long learning in a rapidly changing work environment.

The High Schools of the Future advisory panel members are **Kevin Bals**, Retired High School Principal, High Technology High School; **Ann Borowiec**, Co-Chair of JerseyCAN; **Matt Bosch**, Principal, Boston Consulting Group; **Christopher Brennan**, Former Dean of Business & Workforce Development, Middlesex Community College; **Josh Bronstein**, Head of Global Talent, Bank of America; **Sumeet Chabria**, Entrepreneur, Advisor, and Board Member; **Ramayya Krishnan**, Dean of Heinz College of Information System and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University; **Riaz Shah**, Partner, Global Learning Leader, EY; **Carl Van Horn**, Director of the John J Heidrich Center for Workforce Development Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy, Rutgers University; **Rajneesh Vijh**, Senior Vice President for Global Business Services, Bank of America; and **Ivory Williams**, Vice President, STEM Education, Liberty Science Center.

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About SciTech Scity

SciTech Scity will be a “City of Tomorrow” where companies and researchers test—and residents and visitors experience—new high-tech products and services before they come to market. The first phase, scheduled to fully open in 2025, includes:

- **Edge Works:** A central location for innovation comprising two distinct hubs. The Works will have four floors of labs, research and development spaces, offices, and co-working areas for early stage science and technology businesses. The Co-Creation Center will be a state-of-the-art conference center and tech exhibition gallery.
- **Scholars Village:** Housing being developed by Alpine Residential for innovators, scientists, entrepreneurs, STEM graduate students, and individuals and families who desire to be a part of the SciTech Scity community.
- **Public Commons:** Five-acre outdoor park with activations that encourage exploration, creativity, collaboration, and innovation. An events plaza for concerts, farmers markets, art exhibitions, and food-truck festivals.
- **Liberty Science Center High School:** A county-wide public magnet STEM academy that will be operated by the Hudson County Schools of Technology and offer world-class programming in mathematics, engineering, computer sciences, and basic sciences to students in grades 9 - 12. LSC will offer companion programs to middle-school students from high-needs communities in Jersey City and Hudson County who are interested in the sciences and aspire to attend the new institution.

About Liberty Science Center

Liberty Science Center (LSC.org) is a 300,000-square-foot, not-for-profit learning center located in Liberty State Park on the Jersey City bank of the Hudson near the Statue of Liberty. Dedicated to inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers and bringing the power, promise, and pure fun of science and technology to learners of all ages, Liberty Science Center houses the largest planetarium in the Western Hemisphere, 12 museum exhibition halls, a live animal collection with 110 species, giant aquariums, a 3D theater, live simulcast surgeries, a tornado-force wind simulator, K-12 classrooms and labs, and teacher-development programs. Before COVID-19, more than 250,000 students visited the Science Center each year, and tens of thousands more participated in the Center’s off-site and online programs. Welcoming more than 750,000 visitors annually, LSC is the largest interactive science center in the NYC-NJ metropolitan area.

About Bank of America

At Bank of America, we’re guided by a common purpose to help make financial lives better. As part of this work, we develop strong partnerships with nonprofit organizations addressing issues fundamental to economic mobility and social progress in low- and moderate-income communities. We focus on improving the lives of individuals and families by investing in basic needs and workforce development and education and also strengthening broader community vitality by addressing needs related to affordable housing, small business, and neighborhood revitalization. Through our partnerships, we support vulnerable populations, including working families, youth and young adults out of school and work, seniors, individuals living with disabilities, veterans, and those impacted by the criminal justice system – enabling them to move forward toward their goals. We recognize that people and communities of color continue to face significant challenges, and we are working to advance racial equality and economic opportunity throughout many of our partnerships.