Mount Vernon Economic-Entrepreneurial Urban Revitalization Program Proposal for The City of Mount Vernon, New York

Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement

Summary

ACD Consulting, LLC
Gerald D. Dennis
June 2013

THE NEED:

Mount Vernon, New York, needs our help to ensure a bright future for the city's youth and, in turn, the city itself.

Mount Vernon is the eighth most populous city in the state of New York and the third largest in Westchester County, following Yonkers and New Rochelle. This city has a population of approximately 70,000 and a median age of 35.5. Mount Vernon is one of the only major cities in the state of New York where a minority group accounts for the majority of its population (59.58% African-American, 28.63% White, 10.48% Hispanic, 1.31% Asian of which 4.44% are from other races). Over 98 different nationalities are represented within the city of Mount Vernon.

From an economic perspective, the poverty rate in Mount Vernon is estimated to be 14.2% versus a New York State rate of 8.8% and a national rate of 12.3%. Mount Vernon has a median household income per capita of $49,765 versus a New York state rate of $67,635 and a national rate of $54,595. With a current unemployment rate of 8.7%, Mount Vernon has a higher rate of unemployment than the state and the nation.

Historically segregated
During the 1960s, Mount Vernon was a divided city with northern-style segregation. Many blacks relocated from the South for better employment and educational opportunities. During this same period, many whites from the Bronx and Manhattan considered Mount Vernon a new bedroom community due to rising crime in New York City. The height of this segregation occurred during the 1970s under Mayor August Petrillo. In the mid to late 1980s, a limited degree of change began to develop with the first Afro-Caribbean, Ronald Blackwood, being elected mayor. As a result of those earlier years and still evident today in many of the same and other ways, Mount Vernon is divided by the railroad tracks of Metro-North.

Today's challenges
Mount Vernon is a city geographically divided into four major sections within its four-mile radius: the North Side, the South Side, Mount Vernon Heights and Downtown. Mount Vernon's North Side includes its more affluent homes in contrast to the South Side, which has a strong urban influence that resembles The Bronx and other parts of New York City. Mount Vernon's Downtown includes one contiguous street, Gramatan Avenue, which becomes Fourth Avenue upon crossing over the Metro-North railroad tracks bridge and has historically been considered the shopping district. With a 40-year history, the current south side of the Downtown area best reflects the divide that exists between the two sides of the tracks. Mount Vernon's downtown shopping district has struggled to maintain pace with most of the surrounding communities including Yonkers and New Rochelle's more rapid development.

More specifically regarding the south side of the shopping district, the majority of properties on one of the two primary blocks that comprise the city's Fourth Avenue shopping district are unoccupied, closed or boarded. The first of the two blocks on Fourth Avenue, between first and second streets, are dominated by small store-front business that allow for a limited number of employees. There is a strong visual contrast between the contiguous Fourth Avenue segment and the Gramatan Avenue segment of the shopping district that hosts a similar number of businesses but appears to be operating successfully and is more visually appealing. McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts and several national bank branch offices represent the only major brand name companies outside of two non-national food establishments, and all are located on the northern side of the shopping district.

Public schools in crisis

Consistent with the long-term but slightly lessened divide that remains evident throughout the city of Mount Vernon and the closely linked poor overall economic state of the city, the public school system is suffering. As measured by all existing indicators, the school district is not providing its students with the critical education necessary for them to positively improve the status quo for themselves or the city. Over the last 10 to 15 years as the city has evolved into a minority-dominated community, so has the public school district also changed, but more radically. Of the approximately 9,100 students attending the city's public schools, black and brown children comprise 94% of the population, with black students at 79% versus 59.5% of the general population, Hispanic at 14% versus only 2.2% of the greater population, and Asian at 1%. The most alarming statistic specific to the available data is that of all children attending Mount Vernon Public Schools, 46% are classified as poor or impoverished.

From a public school performance perspective, based on statewide testing reflected in the following chart, the Mount Vernon public education system is in desperate trouble, and the children are suffering a great disservice:

M V CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	*PERFORMANCE INDEX*	*PASS RATE*	*ADVANCED*	*BELOW STANDARD*
4th Grade Science	101	95%	70%	1%
8th Grade Science	38	32%	1%	16%
4th Grade Math	103	69%	28%	4%
8th Grade Math	51	30%	4%	15%
Statistics reflect NY State Regions exams as reflected in a New York Times article, Saturday, July 21, 2012, Tyson Evans, Robert Gebeloff, Andrei Scheinkman				
PERFORMANCE INDEX: How Mount Vernon City School District compares with other districts (100 = state median). **PASS RATE:** Percentage of students who pass each year (Levels 3 and 4). **ADVANCED**: Percentage of students who are advanced proficient (Level 4). **BELOW STANDARD:** Percentage below basic standards (Level 1).				
MOUNT VERNON, City School District Students 9,014 Students, Poor / Poverty- 46%, White - 6%, Black - 79%, Hispanic - 14%, Asian - 1%				

The considerable decline in test performance that occurs between fourth and eighth grades is one clear indicator that this population will not be prepared to compete for the majority of new, meaningful and middle-class enabling career opportunities that require a strong math and science foundation. These statistics also support assertions that the failure of the educational system specific to the children of this city represents a substantial role or is one the root causes closely linked to the poor economic conditions that have dominated the city for an extended period.

THE OPPORTUNITY:

In response to the many challenges and social problems that currently impact the future of the city's children, our solution is to provide additional and significant educational resources. While no single solution will remedy all concerns or eliminate all issues, a technology and science center will provide considerable incremental value. As consistently supported by a number of recognized studies, science and technology centers have a significant, positive impact from an educational perspective for the children of the immediate community. Such nonprofit science and technology centers also have the potential to have a transformative impact on several other aspects of the city, including the economics and culture.

Community collaboration
To accomplish the primary objectives of the center, we will work with various corporate partner-sponsors within the technology and science sector. Our collaborative efforts will enable us to fashion a facility that includes a broad collection of hands-on, interactive technology and science exhibits. Where possible, the physical design of the center and the naming opportunities associated with the facility may also reflect the influence of primary corporate sponsors willing to work extensively and collectively with other partners and the center to enrich the lives of the city's children. The displays and exhibits will be updated semiannually to reflect ongoing advances and new or different trends in both fields. While the center's emphasis will be its capacity to specifically enrich lives through essential learning for our socio-economically limited/deprived school-age residents of Mount Vernon, it will also be positioned as a unique and valuable nonprofit resource, complementary to the public school system of Mount Vernon and a valuable educational resource available to all communities.

Emphasis on education
To achieve or exceed the above objectives, the center will manage an explicit and extensive engagement program with the city's local public school that includes at least two annual visits for each class. Furthermore, the center will work directly with the Mount Vernon Board of Education and those responsible for STEM-related studies to craft an agenda that will produce meaningful learning experiences during the visits and in other optional programs that will be offered in addition to the visits. The center's Community Engagement Programs will also include college scholarship programs, science and technology mentoring with senior professional staff, and optional opportunities for Mount Vernon public school children to participate in after-school, weekend and summer programs designed to deliver meaningful lessons in science and technology.

The majority of activities and other events held at the center will be free of cost to our primary target audience—the Mount Vernon public school attendees. The center will also be an invaluable resource for all children and adults from the city, county and state. Nationally, we anticipate that the center will become a tourist destination, further extending the reach and impact of our efforts.

The Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement

The Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement will be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) foundation for advancing the learning of technology and science for public school children of Mount Vernon.

The center will be as large as financially and logistically possible, a newly built property located in the heart of the South Side's shopping district. Two Fourth Avenue street blocks, between Second and Third streets, have been selected as potential sites. This segment of the city's shopping district has been most devastated by economic challenges, resulting in the majority of stores and business being closed.

The center will be a multi-level, multi-purpose facility that houses dedicated space equipped with displays and various exhibits of highly sophisticated, advanced science and technology to support early exposure and learning. Ideally, the center will provide an interactive learning environment that allows students and visitors to participate in the learning process and enhance their understanding and appreciation of the impact that science and technology have on their lives, society and the future.

Partner with schools for proven impact

As consistently demonstrated, science and technology centers have a significant and positive educational impact on the children of their immediate communities. While the center will make its resources available to all, the target audience of our commitment will be the children attending public school in Mount Vernon.

The center will enhance the potential impact of classroom efforts by creating a strong partnership with the school district to develop an extensive engagement schedule along with a collection of various educational programs that will ensure maximum benefits to the city's public school children. Each class will visit the center twice annually. In addition to providing access and exposing all school age children to the latest advances and developments within the fields of technology and science, the center will complement the public school experience with invaluable exposure and educational experiences intended to expand the understanding of the many influences technology and science have on their lives.

The presentation approach associated with the center's exhibits will encourage learning through interaction, allowing them to develop an understanding of technology and science by being active in the exhibits. The exhibits will reflect new ways of learning that have been extended by STEM-based teaching practices.

Other primary goals of the center include generating student interest in independent study that will provoke and support their pursuing careers as educators, scientists, computer scientists, doctors and engineers.

Sponsors influence design, naming

Working with one, two or several corporate partners-sponsors within the technology and science sector, we will collaborate to fashion a facility that includes a broad collection of technology and science exhibits. The general design of the center may be influenced by the companies and organizations that commit to partnership. Influence specific to naming the facility may also be extended to organizations that meet or exceed the requested level of contribution. Where possible, the physical design of the center may also reflect the input of the primary corporate sponsors who are willing to work collectively with other partners and the city to enrich the lives of the city's children. The displays and exhibits will be updated semiannually to reflect advances and new or different trends in both fields.

Additionally, the center will allow for several major leading technology and science-based companies to showcase their technology/science and advance their brand through making a significant social contribution to the lives of many disadvantaged children. One potential focus for the exhibits includes specific corporate

partners helping to create interactive exhibits that reflect the specifics of the science or technology associated with a product, invention or innovation that they are responsible for bringing to market.

Revenue generation from state-of-the-art facility
The facility will be designed to include a state-of-the-art theater for various forms of media delivery, small classrooms, offices, a science laboratory, a technology laboratory, large convertible conference room and kitchen. The center will have the facilities to support various types of educational activities extended to city children in the form of after-school and summer instructional programs provided by guest lecturers, educators and center staff, including interns from the city's public schools. The size and design of the center will be sufficient enough to sustain several potential themes, including technology, science, engineering, sports, history and music. The diversity of the facility will generate broad interest and appeal from its capacity to introduce many children to enriched learning opportunities that they might otherwise never encounter during their critical developmental years.

Achieving the ideal design of the center will result in a multi-level facility with conference capacity for groups of 200 to 1,000 persons. The center will also be a facility capable of hosting small to midsize business meetings, group presentations and other similar business and social functions and events. The capacity for hosting various events and the general nature of the center will enable revenue generation as a cultural and educational center, business center and tourist attraction. Additional revenue will come from non-profit membership participation. Having a state-of-the-art facility located in the heart of the Mount Vernon business district will create critical and positive change, including wide-ranging general business growth. Additionally, the facility will maintain exclusivity as the only such facility in the surrounding area.

The asserted general business growth will be the anticipated result of creating a center that introduces visitors to a unique encounter with technology and science. As such the center will serve as a viable tourist attraction. In addition to addressing the primary concerns of the target population, the center will offer resources to others from the surrounding area, state and nation, who will also be attracted to visit. Considering other similar facilities created in urban areas around the country, business from all sectors including the service industry can be expected to seek participation in the geography surrounding the center.

PROSPECTIVE BUILDING CONFIGURATION:

- Technology Wing (Primary)
- Science Wing (Primary)
- Mount Vernon History Wing (Secondary)
- Theater / Auditorium (250 to 300 person capacity)
- Conference Room / Banquet Room (1,000 person capacity)
- Classrooms (2-4 rooms 25 to 30 person capacity)
- Science Laboratory (25 to 30 person capacity with laboratory capability)
- Technology Laboratory (25 to 30 person capacity with laboratory capability)
- Small Offices (8 -12 offices, 4 to 6 person capacity)
- Kitchen / Cafeteria (75 -100 person capacity)

Technology Wing
The goal for the Technology Wing, one of the two primary elements of the facility, is to incorporate a vast but consistent collection of the technology that dominates today's market. Our partnering with a number of major vendors will sustain the ability to include various technological exhibits and displays that offer a basic to broad understanding of how technology has evolved into what is currently represented within the home

and business environment. Ideally, through the various displays including interactive exhibits, a visitor will complete the tour of the wing with a new or enhanced understanding of (1) the evolution of technology, (2) a host of applications enabled through technology, (3) the general science that created the foundation for technology, (4) how technology impacts our daily lives and (5) what the future may hold for technology. One of the primary goals of the wing is to provide access and a robust introduction to the extensive range of technology. Students will gain awareness of how technology is used to enable a product and its associated history, resulting in the student visitors wanting to know more and identify a role for their personal participation in technology.

The Technology Wing's inclusion of a broad cross-section of technology from leading market providers will be driven by the willingness of vendors to work collaboratively and consistently with the mission of the center and other vendors to create a rich learning environment that affords the children of the community access and insight that they might otherwise not experience. The center will provide access to technology that will complement the local public school efforts in this regard. Ideally, and most importantly, the Technology Wing will provide insight through hands-on engagement that will stimulate and inspire students to increase their study efforts associated with the general topic and to pursue careers in the field of technology. The center will extend significant efforts to achieve alignment with the goals and objectives of The STEM Education Coalition.

The Technology Wing will also include a special area focused on the achievement of **women in technology**, including leadership roles that women hold in the sector. This area will include historical and current perspectives on the achievements and significant contributions that women in particular have made to the field. The focus will allow the center to provide additional encouragement to young girls to consider careers as teachers, scientists, computer scientists, doctors and engineers.

In addition to the twice annual tours of the facility that will be made available to every public school class in the city, the center will also offer internships, after-school, summer and other special programs open to our public school students who have demonstrated or expressed interest in technology. To achieve this goal, special guest instructors will be engaged to complement the center's staff.

Science Wing

Consistent with the wing for technology, the objective for the Science Wing is to provide students and other visitors with access to the fundamentals of science that drives our collective advances in the various areas of our lives through understanding and utilizing scientific study and approaches. One of the goals of the exhibits is to provide interactive examples of the application of science or the systematic and logical approach to discovering how things in the universe work and impact our lives. By partnering with various companies whose core products or offerings result from science and scientific approach, the center will show visitors the relationship between the specific science and the resulting products, including meaningful contributions that have enhanced our existence.

Importantly and ideally, the Science Wing will provide insight through hands-on engagement that will inspire students to increase their study efforts associated with the general topic and to pursue careers in the sciences. Exhibits that bring awareness through the learning process of the science that supports and accounts for advancements in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, energy, medicine, aviation and robotics would all be consistent with the mission of the center. The center will drive alignment with the goals and objectives of The STEM Education Coalition by providing additional and complementary resources not practical within or available through the public school system.

The Science Wing will also include a special area focused on the achievement of **women in the field of science**, including leadership roles that women hold in the sector. This area will include historical and current perspectives on the achievements and significant contributions that women in particular have made to

science. The focus will allow the center to provide additional encouragement to young girls attending the facility to consider careers as scientists, computer scientists, doctors and engineers.

In addition to the twice annual tours of the facility that will be made available to every public school class in the city, the center will also offer internships, after-school, summer and other special programs open to our public school students who have demonstrated or expressed interest in science. To achieve this goal, special guest instructors will be engaged to complement the center's staff.

Mount Vernon History Wing
This segment of the center will be dedicated to providing historical insight on the city of Mount Vernon. This wing will focus on successful individuals with a connection to the city. Individuals from the fields of music, sports, entertainment and business will collectively be represented through a compilation of displays that produce an inspirational narrative reflecting the vast possibilities for a successful future for those currently growing up in Mount Vernon. Providing the current student population with a broad array of potential role models connected to Mount Vernon will be an additional value associated with the center.

Theater/Auditorium
The center's theater will support a seated audience of 250 to 300, which is large enough to host multiple public school classes or small to mid-size corporate groups. Ideally, the facility will be equipped with state-of-the-art media capabilities including 3/4-D capacity for film exhibition and support for live performances. A class tour of the center would include a high-tech film presentation to further enhance students' understanding of technology and science and what the future holds.

In addition, the theater/auditorium will support the center's capacity to meet business conference hosting requirements along with hosting small to mid-size concerts, theatrical productions and live performances. All would be essential to the facility's capacity to drive ongoing revenue.

Conference Room / Banquet Room
The conference room will be designed to support 250 to 1,000 guests for presentations, conferences and other similar events. Additionally, the conference room will have the ability to be divided into multiple smaller conference rooms and transform into a banquet room. Consistent with the theater/auditorium, the room will also effectively support the center's capacity to meet business conference hosting requirements essential to the facility's capacity to drive ongoing revenue.

Technology Laboratory
The functional laboratory would include the computer equipment and technology necessary to support experimental and other enriched study efforts.

Science Laboratory
The functional laboratory would include the scientific resources, equipment and technology necessary to support experimental and other enriched study efforts.

Classrooms
The four to six classrooms will support the center's ability to host student classroom activities, including special lectures with science or technology guest presenters throughout the year, special science and technology events that would generate interest within the community and surrounding area, and special science and technology-based summer programs that would target the Mount Vernon student population.

In addition, the classrooms will also support the center's capacity to meet the business conference hosting requirements essential to the facility's capacity to drive ongoing revenue.

Small Offices
The eight to 12 small offices disbursed throughout the facility will support various meetings with visitors and staff, including conferences between students and presenters. The small offices will also support the center's capacity to meet business conference hosting requirements essential to the facility's capacity to drive ongoing revenue.

Kitchen / Cafeteria
A fully-equipped kitchen and cafeteria/dining area will be created to support the potential for hosting small to mid-size groups of students and others informally. The kitchen will be designed and equipped to support food preparation for small to mid-sized groups of attendees. In addition to addressing the various requirements of the attending student population, the kitchen / cafeteria will also support the center's ability to meet the business conference hosting requirements essential to the facility's capacity to drive ongoing revenue.

CENTER PROGRAMS SUMMARY

Science and Technology Tour

The interactive facility tour will be the primary vehicle to introduce the city's public school classes of all ages to the center and all displays and exhibits. The approximate three-hour tour will be constructed to support an effective introduction at the appropriate grade level and include time for students in the group to become engaged with selected exhibits, initially through the direction and support of the tour guide. The tour will include two 10-minute breaks and conclude with a 15 to 20 minute media presentation in the centers' theater that reflects the science or technology utilized by one or more of the centers' corporate sponsors.

This program will be driven by the centers' engagement efforts with the city's board of education leadership. The collaboration will produce a schedule that provides for two annual visits by all classes from every school, during the first and second half of the school calendar year. Up to three classes will be given the tour simultaneously in separate groups then combined at the end of the tour for the media presentation. Depending on the number of children in each grade level from all city schools, the visits from all students in a specific grade will occur over a one or two day period. The first series of visits will be conducted starting in September and concluding in December. The second series of visits for the school year will commence in February and conclude in May. The month of January will be used to work with corporate partners to implement the appropriate changes to reflect general changes and/or updates in technology and science specific to the various exhibits and displays.

Similar tours will be developed specifically for general population visits, with appropriate variance for age-specific delivery.

Evening of Science and Technology

This program will focus on engaging parents of Mount Vernon public school children. The tour of the facility will be similar to the tours provided for students but with an emphasis on what parents can expect their children to learn and the associated value added to their in-school learning process. The tour will also include a review of the expected educational impact of the center on the community's children and identify how they can support and encourage the learning process. Parents attending the event for the first time will attend free of charge.

Technology & Science Internship Program

The center will create an internship program that engages students from seventh to 12th grades to work at the center as tour guide assistants, lab assistants and other secondary support roles within the center. In addition to the exposure and related knowledge gained from working with center staff, interns will be financially compensated.

Technology & Science Mentoring Program

The program will include each professional staff member of the center serving as a mentor to an agreed-upon number of students currently attending one of the city's public schools.

Additional Programs (specific curriculum to be determined)

- Technology and Science After-School Programs
- Technology & Science Summer Programs
- Technology & Science Lecture Series
- Technology & Science Scholarship Program

Objectives Summary

The Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement is being established to provide Mount Vernon public school children with access to technology and science that will enrich the learning experience associated with each subject matter. The following will be central to our achievement of the targeted outcome:

- Build a meaningful, cooperative relationship with the school district that will support the creation of an engagement and visitation schedule for every first through 12th grade student twice per school year.

- Create a collection of after-school activities and programs for advanced pre-college-bound study as well as weekend and summer programs that allow the public school population optional and additional access to the technology and science available within the center.

- Provide internships to junior-high and high-school students to allow them the opportunity to work at and be a part of a center, significantly extending their knowledge of the inner workings of the installations and associated technology and science.

- Create a program that successfully engages parents and provides them with learning opportunities that build a basic understanding and appreciation for technology, science and the potential for enhancement to the lives of their children.

- Create a mentorship and scholarship program based on interest and achievement to help selected students complete four-year degree programs.

Mission Summary

The mission of the Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement will be achieved with an ongoing dedication to the following principles:

- **Commitment**: Through access and the resulting insight, the facility intends to create an enriched learning environment specific to technology and science that will inspire Mount Vernon public school children to increase their learning efforts and consider careers within the areas of concentration.
- **Responsibility**: The primary focus and responsibility of the Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement is to empower our local public school attendees through early and consistent exposure to the subject matter.
- **Possibility**: The Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement is committed to expanding the perspective of young people to make them aware of life's potential made possible by the increase in learning of the subject matter available at the center.
- **Support**: The Mount Vernon Technology & Science Youth Center for Advancement through working with our corporate sponsors is committed to building a strong alliance with the school district to introduce new and critical elements to the learning process that are not readily or traditionally available in the public school experience. The highest level of commitment to quality program delivery and professionalism will be evident in all facets of the center's operation.

Keys to Success Summary

- Establishing meaningful extended partnerships with leading-edge technology and science providers that will support the creation of a resource-rich science and technology center.
- Create an environment that incorporates a broad range of technology and science exhibits, displays and media presentations that engage the imagination and intellect of school children of all ages.
- Establish a strong collaborative relationship with the school district leadership that allows the student population to fully utilize the center's resources to enhance and stimulate the educational process.
- See meaningful improvement specific to state science and math testing results for Mount Vernon public school population.
- Create secondary but essential programs that will produce meaningful revenue streams, including business center services, social outings, community theatrical event hosting, ongoing membership programs, general fundraising, admission fees for non Mount Vernon public school children and all adult visitors.
- Work with local governance to eliminate safety-related concerns for tourists and visitors in the area surrounding the center and throughout the city.
- Provide significant assistance in transforming the current culture into one that reflects a commitment to our public school system producing students that are prepared to pursue careers as teachers, scientists, doctors, engineers and computer scientists.

Future Center Revenue / Income Resources Summary

Beyond this initial fundraising effort, the completed cultural and advanced learning non-profit center will be positioned to generate ongoing financial revenues from several sources, including:

- Non-resident children visitors fees
- All adult visitors fees
- Membership fees & ongoing contribution-based funding
- In-house gift shop sales
- Business & conference center services
- Community engagement programs & events
- Government grants
- University partnerships

Financial Construction Cost Summary

Based on preliminary discussions, the center will require:

- Approximately 170 x 110 feet, or 18,700 square feet with a net of 15,000 square feet
- Five floors including a fully functional finished basement for a total of 75,000 square feet
- LEED certification, including solar and other green energy capabilities to address energy requirements
- Approximate and conservative construction cost of $450 per square feet for a total cost of $40,000,000

All capital to fund the construction of the center and support its initial operation will be generated through a Capital Fundraising Campaign. At least 91 percent of all funds contributed will go directly to the building and support of the center. Funds will be consistently audited by an independent major accounting firm and audits made publicly available.

Considering the nature, structure and objective for the non-profit center, we will be positioned to successfully campaign for financial resources and general assistance, including government grants, major corporate sponsorship, philanthropic contributions and high-wealth individual contributors. Our initial capital fundraising target is $150,000,000 or more. The initial fundraising campaign capital will support the physical construction of the center. The balance of funds raised will provide the resources necessary to launch and operate the facility for the initial few years. The target list of potential donors reflects companies, organizations and individuals that will receive a communication package and personal letter with the appropriate signatory seeking their partnership in support of our efforts to change the lives of our city's children. In most cases, the communication package will contain support collaterals including a brief history of Mount Vernon, current economic and social challenges of Mount Vernon with emphasis on our student population, a review of the center's concept and the entire effort reflected within this document that demonstrates a commitment to the children of the city.

SOCIAL IMPACT SUMMARY - MOUNT VERNON TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE YOUTH CENTER FOR ADVANCEMENT

SOCIAL PROBLEM

The current public school system is not adequately preparing students to be successful in a global economy specific to STEM-based subject matter. Evidence of this ongoing and damaging social problem is reflected in several ways, including in NY State Regents Science & Math Exams at fourth and eighth grade levels. Inadequate education in these vital areas lends to creating a community with higher than average poverty rates, unemployment rates, crime rates and perpetual underperformance with a general lack of meaningful achievement in all aspects.

MISSION

The center's primary objective is to create transformative communitywide change by providing the city's public school children with significant incremental resources specific to embracing and learning science and technology. The center's resources will support early, often and consistent exposure and access to science and technology subject matter. Such additional access and exposure has been proven to facilitate successful learning opportunities that result in improved test scores and increased interest in science and technology, including advanced studies, careers within the two fields and greater preparation for the students to mature into adults that are prepared to compete and succeed in the global economy.

SOCIAL IMPACT STRATEGIES

The center will be equipped with a wide range of interactive, hands-on technology and science exhibits that enable a significant expansion of knowledge specific to the two fields. Working with a host of leading technology and science-based companies, exhibits will be created to support a basic to complete understanding of the utilization of science and technology to create product or drive innovation.

OPERATING MODEL

One of the primary processes of the center will be to establish a meaningful collaborative relationship with the local Board of Education leadership that results in consistent engagement of all public school attendees from first through 12th grades. In additional to twice annual planned tours of the facility, the center will also provide a compilation of extracurricular activities to further engage public school children, including after-school programs, weekend programs and summer programs. Other special opportunities will be extended to increase exposure and enable additional learning for the target student population and parents where appropriate.

SOCIAL IMPACT INDICATORS

The primary measures will include the number of visits made by target public school children, the number of local children that participate in the center's optional science and technology programs/activities and the number of parents and children from the local school system that participate in optional programs /activities. An additional primary indicator will be student test scores and the degree of improvement and college placement within the 3 to 5 year timeframe.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The indicators specific to achieving desired outcomes will be best measured by the degree of collaboration established between school board leadership and the center's leadership and the resulting extent of engagement with the target population. An indication of short-term success will also be identified through the interest level specific to science and technology expressed by students in their classroom setting.

VISION OF SUCCESS

The success of the center would have its greatest impact on the children attending the Mount Vernon public school system. The impact would include:

1. Students actively embrace the center and exploit its resources to expand their level of understanding and interest in the two fields of study.
2. Improvements in their participation in class study and test results would also be expected outcomes associated with the center.
3. A cultural change driven by the center would produce a significant and incremental amount of children that would be prepared to pursue advanced study and careers in either of the two fields.

We envision a day when—through collaboration and coordination with the school system, corporate partners and colleges—all Mount Vernon public school children, regardless of race, gender or economic status, will have access to the state-of-the-art science and technology that is needed for them to live productive lives, including having choices of careers such as teachers, scientists, computer scientists, doctors and engineers.