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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Opening Doors to Discovery M&T Bank Invests in the Next Generation of Innovators

Rome, NY – June 2, 2026 - A student launches a rocket they designed, built, and tested themselves. Another sees their code come to life for the first time. These are the moments that change how a young person sees what's possible.

A \$20,000 charitable gift from M&T Bank helped Griffiss Institute establish its PASSPORT afterschool STEM program in Rome and is now expanding access to opportunity through its STEM Circuit initiative in Little Falls, NY.

The initial investment accelerated the development and launch of PASSPORT, enabling Griffiss Institute to quickly establish a sustained afterschool learning environment in which students engage in enduring STEM enrichment throughout the year. PASSPORT is now fully supported by the Griffin Foundation, ensuring its continued growth and impact. Building on that momentum, M&T's investment is also helping Griffiss Institute extend access to these transformative experiences through STEM Circuit Little Falls, a multi-week summer program that brings immersive STEM learning directly to students in Little Falls, NY.

Running from July through August 2026, STEM Circuit Little Falls will offer six weeks of programming for students in grades 3-6, with two sessions for grades 7-9. Each week focuses on a distinct STEM discipline, including robotics, quantum technology, cybersecurity, drones, and entrepreneurship, allowing students to explore multiple pathways through flexible, week-by-week enrollment.

By connecting curiosity to real-world applications, these programs open pathways to opportunities in science and technology, supporting more than 120 student experiences and expanding access for families across the region. The STEM Circuit model is designed to meet students where they are, delivering immersive STEM programming directly into schools and communities.

"This support allows us to create and foster summer experiences where students can explore STEM, build confidence, and begin to see what's possible," said Heather Hage, president



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and CEO of Griffiss Institute. “It’s about sparking curiosity early and ensuring families have access to opportunities that help their children learn, grow, and thrive.”

These experiences are reinforced through Griffiss Institute’s broader STEM programming, which provides students with opportunities to deepen their engagement through design, building, and application, transforming STEM from a subject into something they actively create.

This growing ecosystem of programs reflects a shared commitment between Griffiss Institute and its partners to expand access to high-quality STEM learning experiences.

“At M&T Bank, we are proud to support programs that deliver meaningful, measurable impact within the communities we serve,” said Steve Gorczynski, M&T Bank Central New York Regional President. “Griffiss Institute’s commitment to expanding access to STEM education and tracking outcomes aligns closely with our mission to invest in initiatives that create long-term opportunity and strengthen the future workforce.”

This growing demand is reflected in participation trends across Griffiss Institute’s youth STEM programming. In 2025 alone, a record 695 students participated in Griffiss Institute STEM camps across the Mohawk Valley, underscoring strong and sustained interest in accessible, experiential STEM learning opportunities.

More information about Griffiss Institute’s STEM programs, including upcoming summer camps, can be found at <https://www.griffissinstitute.org/stem/summer-camps/>.


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About Griffiss Institute

Griffiss Institute is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization based in Rome, NY, accelerating national security innovation through its three-pillar mission of Talent, Technology, and Venture Development. As the steward of the Innovare Advancement Center, an open, unclassified research and collaboration campus, Griffiss Institute fosters and drives partnerships across government, industry, and academia to advance dual-use technologies. Griffiss Institute is committed to strengthening national security through nontraditional STEM education, accelerated innovation, and the commercialization of emerging technologies, with a deep belief in American-made solutions, and the development of a resilient U.S. science and engineering workforce.

About M&T Bank

M&T Bank Corporation is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T’s principal banking subsidiary, M&T Bank, provides banking products and services in 12 states across the eastern U.S. from Maine to Virginia and Washington, D.C. Trust-related services are provided in select markets in the U.S. and abroad by M&T’s Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank. For more information on M&T Bank, visit www.mtb.com.



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