

UT-Battelle awards more than \$200,000 in grants to 28 nonprofits

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A volunteer hands out Center of Science and Industry Connects Kits in Columbus, Ohio, in fall 2020 to bolster at-home learning during the pandemic. UT-Battelle has awarded a grant to purchase 1,000 COSI kits for East Tennessee students. Credit: Center of Science and Industry

UT-Battelle is supporting high-impact, community-focused programs, managed by 28 local nonprofits, with grants totaling more than \$200,000, which will fund multiple outreach efforts from take-home STEM education kits for students to growing STEM Scouts to outfitting a mobile robotics shop.

UT-Battelle manages and operates Oak Ridge National Laboratory for the U.S. Department of Energy.

“Our grant program levels the playing field for local organizations of all sizes — especially efforts that support K-12 STEM education and career awareness — to receive funding for projects that benefit our community,” said Wade Creswell, ORNL community engagement manager. “We are excited to see these gifts put to great use, and we look forward to a new round of applicants in July.”

For example, one of the grants will go toward purchasing 1,000 Center of Science and

Industry Connects Kits, which are science-themed boxes that contain a week's worth of at-home STEM activities, to be delivered to students at Campbell County's Elk Valley Elementary School, Roane County's Midway Elementary School, Midway High School and Oliver Springs High School.

The organizations receiving funding include:

African American Affinity Resource Council
American Museum of Science and Energy
Anderson County Chamber of Commerce
Center of Science and Industry
East Tennessee FIRST LEGO League
FIRST Robotics Team 4462
Flagship Robotics 3140 Foundation
Halls High School Robotics
Hardin Valley Academy Foundation
Hardin Valley Robotics shop
Junior Achievement of East Tennessee
Knoxville Chamber
Knoxville Symphony Youth Orchestra
L&N STEMpunks Robotics
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
Muse Knoxville
Museum of Appalachia
Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club and the Altrusa of Oak Ridge
Oak Ridge Chamber
Oak Ridge Playhouse
Oak Ridge Public Schools Education Foundation
Roane Alliance
Roane State Community College Foundation
South Doyle Robotics
STEM Scouts – Great Smoky Mountain Council BSA
Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Tennessee Historical Commission
Webb Robotics

These grants represent a new process that allows local organizations to apply for support through the lab's Community Engagement Office twice a year. Under the new process, a monthlong application period will be open in January and July with awards given in February and August, respectively. An organization is eligible to receive funding once a year to deliver programs in five categories: civic/cultural, economic development, public awareness, STEM education and volunteerism.