THE BURNS & MCDONNELL BATTLE OF THE BRAINS IS BACK AND HeadING OUTSIDE AT SCIENCE CITY

The Winning Student Exhibit from the Popular Educational Competition Will Be a Key Feature of Union Station’s Western Expansion Project

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (May 14, 2015) – Burns & McDonnell is partnering with Science City for a third time to offer area students and teachers the opportunity to participate in one of the nation’s most robust STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) competitions. The Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains invites schools to compete for a piece of a $150,000-plus grant and the winning school will design the next amazing exhibit for Science City. This year, there’s a unique new twist – the exhibit will be featured outside.

“This exhibit will be a crown jewel in our new western expansion project,” said George Guastello, president and CEO at Union Station, who recently announced they will break ground on a $7.5 million premiere outdoor events plaza later this year. “We have never had a permanent exhibit featured outdoors at Union Station and we can’t wait to see what the imaginative minds of Kansas City area students will come up with for this special space outside.”

Educators in 18 Kansas and Missouri counties can sign up at battleofthebrainskc.com in the elementary or secondary division until September 11. All metro area schools are eligible to compete and there is no limit to the number of entries a school can submit.

Burns & McDonnell introduced the Battle of the Brains competition in 2011 to spark greater interest in STEM education. Since then, nearly 5,000 students in the metro area have benefitted from this experiential, one-of-a-kind educational opportunity.

“This is much more than a science competition. It’s an adventure we go on with area students that spans two years. The first year they dream up an exhibit. The second year, their winning idea serves as inspiration for an exhibit Burns & McDonnell builds at Union Station,” says Greg Graves, chairman and
CEO, Burns & McDonnell, who says the goal of the program, is to inspire in students a spark and a passion for STEM topics that will resonate throughout their lives.

“We provide mentors and coaching sessions to help teachers incorporate Battle of the Brains into their curriculum and give students a new perspective of STEM-related careers. Each year, we have countless students who say Battle of the Brains inspired them to pursue a STEM-related major in college.”

Battle of the Brains alumni have produced three interactive exhibits at Science City valued at more than $2 million. In addition, Burns & McDonnell has invested in two additional exhibits — Science on a Sphere and the Burns & McDonnell Engineerium –to help invigorate interest in STEM topics.

“Battle of the Brains has been a game-changer that has engaged and inspired students across our community,” Guastello says. “Attendance at Science City has grown by double digits annually over the last three years. Part of that growth is fueled by the new exhibits and expanded programming. Whenever you put so many creative minds together, good things are bound to happen. Science City and Kansas City are better because of programs like Battle of the Brains and companies like Burns & McDonnell.”

In November, a panel of judges will select the finalists and invite the public to vote on their favorite exhibit idea. The winning school will be announced at a special awards ceremony later that month at Union Station.

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**Union Station Kansas City, Inc.**

Union Station Kansas City is a historical landmark and civic asset renovated and reopened to the public in 1999. The organization, driven by its mission of science, history education and entertainment, is home to Kansas City’s Science Center; the popular Model Railroad Experience; the Arvin Gottlieb Planetarium; the Regnier Extreme Screen Theatre, H&R Block City Stage featuring live theater, and a selection of unique shops and restaurants. Union Station is also home to prominent area civic organizations and businesses and regularly hosts world-class traveling exhibitions and community events. Visit [www.unionstation.org](http://www.unionstation.org) for details.