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MEDIA ADVISORY

Artificial Intelligence for Georgia" Project Empowers Schools to Embrace the Future of AI

Columbus, GA — **6/23/2025** - The Artificial Intelligence for Georgia (AI4GA) project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF Awards DRL-2049029 and DRL-2048502) and Google, is transforming the way Artificial Intelligence (AI) is introduced and taught in Georgia's middle schools. This groundbreaking initiative, driven by partnerships among Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Institute of Technology, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Florida, Boston College, BK International Education Consultancy, MaxPoReal, Amber Sparks Education and The Findings Group, is making waves in the local classrooms.

With collaboration from 15 Georgia school districts, including Muscogee County School District, 20 dedicated teachers, principals, and CTAE Directors, AI4GA has reshaped the future of learning for 1,655 middle school students across the state since 2021.

"Teaching AI across the K–12 spectrum is crucial for preparing students for a future where AI literacy will be a fundamental skill. Middle school is a significant developmental period for students which makes this project both important and timely. AI tools can complement this developmental stage by engaging students in thinking critically about content and how they can leverage AI tools within their own personal learning journey. This project also recognizes that educators are key in guiding students through the ethical, practical, and innovative uses of AI, ensuring that as they mature, they are not only

proficient in the use of AI but also understanding of its impact on society," said Dr. David Lewis, Superintendent.

"Our district is excited to be participating in this initiative. Artificial intelligence is developing at such a frantic pace, we knew it was important to get involved with this work as soon as the opportunity became available," said Victoria Thomas, Senior Director of CTAE, STEAM & Robotics for the Muscogee County School District. "We are fortunate to have teachers who were willing to take risks and forge a path for other educators to follow because there is no roadmap to show us how AI will evolve."

An exciting update from this past week: Christi Scarbrough (Veterans Memorial Middle) and Lynn Hall-Green represented the district with excellence at Georgia Tech, where they co-facilitated a dynamic professional learning session focused on artificial intelligence in education. Together, they built a strong sense of community, unpacked complex AI concepts, and provided invaluable support to more than 40 educators from Georgia, Florida, and New York. Their leadership and expertise left a lasting impact on the participants and demonstrated the high caliber of educators within our district.

Strengthening Teaching with Job-Embedded Supports

Middle school Computer Science, Career Technical Education, and Science teachers learn about the 5 Big Ideas of AI and are supported with ongoing professional learning opportunities, including online micro-courses. Muscogee County School District has been a valued long-term partner of AI4GA for three years, thanks to the dedication and leadership of CTAE Director Victoria Thomas. The district's commitment to advancing AI education is exemplified by Richards Middle School, where AI4GA first launched with teacher Lynn Hall-Green, and Veterans Memorial Middle School, where AI4GA teachers Christi Scarbrough and Sam Simpkins continue to drive innovation in the classroom. Their collective efforts have helped integrate AI learning into the curriculum, equipping students with essential skills for the future.

Exploring AI Through Innovative Learning

AI4GA makes AI engaging and accessible to middle school students, with a focus on African American, Latino/a/x, and rural students. By integrating real-world AI applications, students gain hands-on experience in understanding how AI works and its impact on their everyday lives. Through a nine-week AI elective, *Living and Working with Artificial Intelligence*, students and teachers explore AI as creators, sparking curiosity and inspiring future STEM-powered careers. "We're using AI4GA as a springboard to contextualize the need for AI literacy in populations that have the potential to be negatively impacted by AI agents," said Bryan Cox, AI4GA Co-Principal Investigator and Research Faculty at Georgia Tech.

Building a Pathway for AI-Powered Careers

The AI4GA project provides real-world examples of how AI is shaping industries and preparing them for future opportunities. By fostering personal identities as STEM creators, students are equipped to thrive in a rapidly evolving workforce. One resource developed as a result of needs expressed by teachers are AI Career Cards which explore a wide variety of careers that create Artificial Intelligence. Project resources ensure teachers feel supported and confident in delivering innovative AI to their students.

Empowering Educators to Co-Design Curriculum

A cornerstone of the AI4GA initiative is empowering local educators to co-design an AI curriculum that is both relevant and impactful. Judith Uchidiuno, Assistant Professor at Georgia Tech's School of Interactive Computing, champions educators as middle school experts to craft engaging curriculum and activities with university Computer Science subject matter experts. "AI is relevant across subjects, and [teachers] need the confidence to integrate it," stated Scarbrough. As a result of the research-practitioner partnership, teachers develop as teacher leaders and mentor others in Georgia and now Texas.

About AI4GA

The AI4GA project is a multi-university and public partnership aimed at advancing AI education in Georgia's middle schools. Funded by the National Science Foundation and Google, the initiative leverages the expertise of leading academic institutions and community partners to create a sustainable impact in STEM education. For more information, visit ai4ga.org.

About Muscogee County School District

The Muscogee County School District is dedicated to providing an education that inspires and equips students to achieve their full potential and become productive citizens in a global society. Focusing on excellence, equity, and innovation, the district serves a diverse student population, fostering academic success, personal growth, and community engagement.

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