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Love SAM expands at North Albany Academy

Citizens Bank has provided a \$5,000 grant to support and expand the Love SAM program at North Albany Academy.

Love SAM – Science and Math – was launched at North Albany in 2006 in partnership with GE and the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce. It since has grown to include elementary schools in five more counties throughout Tech Valley with support from the New York State Senate.



Teacher Kim Gregory works with first-graders using Love SAM tools.

The first class of Love SAM students at North Albany now is in third grade. The announcement by Citizens Bank will allow North Albany to expand the program to include a first-grade class.

“Love SAM has been an outstanding partnership for the school district and for our students at North Albany Academy,” said Superintendent Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D. “We are so pleased that Citizens Bank now has joined this partnership to help us sustain and grow it.”

Love SAM provides the academic tools and resources for students to experience science learning in a classroom environment equipped as a real-life discovery laboratory. Each class environment is centered on themes that embrace the four major branches of science: life science, earth science, chemistry, and physics.

Love SAM is designed to supplement and build on the state requirements for science and math through hands-on inquiry-based activities, field trips, cutting-edge technology and authentic science and math experiences with Tech Valley professionals.

“It is critical that we nurture the love of science and math in our young people to produce the kind of highly skilled workforce that will be required to continue to attract technology-based companies to our community,” said Robert M. Curley, president of Citizens Bank in New York state.

Recent studies have shown that American students continue to lag well behind their counterparts overseas in science and math.

The scores from the 2006 Program for International Student Assessment revealed that 15-year-olds in the United States trailed their peers in science in 16 of 30 industrialized countries. U.S. students were further behind in math, trailing counterparts in 23 countries.

“We know we have to do more – and do it better – if the United States is to maintain its position as a world leader in a global economy that day by day grows more reliant on technology,” Dr. Joseph said.

That is why the district has placed a strong emphasis on strengthening its curriculum in these key areas. Love SAM is one of many cutting-edge initiatives the district offers at all grade levels in order to turn today’s Albany students into tomorrow’s technology innovators.

Programs such as:

- The groundbreaking NanoHigh partnership with the University at Albany’s College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering
- Project Lead the Way at Albany High School
- The Academy of Engineering that will debut at Albany High next school year
- At the middle school level, the Excelsior Scholars Nanoscale Science Summer Institute and Gateway Academy programs launched this summer.
- The YouthForce 2020 partnership with Turner Construction at North Albany Academy

“We’re here about our future and we’re here about our kids,” James Gaspo, director of corporate banking for Citizens in New York, said during Wednesday’s announcement at the school.