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ILLINOIS STATE REPRESENTATIVE MARY EDLY-ALLEN RECEIVES STAND UP FOR STEM AWARD

December 5, 2019 CHICAGO, Illinois — As part of Million Women Mentors’ five-year anniversary and its national day to celebrate women, girls and mentoring across all state organizations, State Representative Mary Edly-Allen of Libertyville’s 51st District was presented with the Stand Up for STEM Award today at mHUB Chicago.

“As a teacher, I witnessed how the scales of equity need more balance. Mentorship can help tip these scales and be a powerful key to success, especially for women,” said Representative Edly-Allen. “Everyone needs a mentor; someone who sees our talent and ability, someone to encourage us along the way and someone who can show us we can own our space. By accepting this award I commit to continue to be an advocate for comprehensive STEM education and I shine a light on the many women of the past who paved the road ahead of me. I am especially grateful to the many mentors in my life, who believed in me and said, "You can".

In a letter to Representative Edly-Allen, Honorary Chair for Million Women Mentors-Illinois, U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, said, “This significant accomplishment is a testament to your dedication to providing young Illinoisans with access to comprehensive science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. Your advocacy efforts and steadfast devotion to fostering positive learning environments work to help our students achieve brighter futures and paves the way for the next generation of STEM leaders.”

Representative Edly-Allen was nominated for the award by Jenny Kopach, Executive Director of Illinois-based Science Olympiad, a national non-profit partner of Million Women Mentors. Ms. Kopach has served as the MWM-Illinois State Chair for five years. “The statistics about gender gaps in STEM education can’t be ignored,” said Ms. Kopach. “While women make up more than 50% of the population, they represent less than 24% of the STEM workforce. Leaders like Mary can champion policies and legislation that support developing a career-ready workforce for Illinois as well as inspire girls and women to consider STEM pathways.”

Representative Edly-Allen has been active in the education community for decades, as a Science Olympiad coach, mentor, tournament director, and member of the Illinois Science Olympiad Board. As a parent volunteer,

she co-founded Foundation 46, a non-profit committed to enriching educational experiences in Grayslake's District 46, where she has been a bilingual educator since 2006. Representative Edly-Allen has a B.A. in Education from Northeastern Illinois University and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction with bilingual certification from National Louis University. Seeking new ways to serve her community and ensure equity and fairness for all, she ran for a seat in the Illinois House of Representatives in 2018 and won her first election.

[Science Olympiad](#) is a Chicago-area based, national non-profit organization founded in 1984 dedicated to improving the quality of K-12 STEM education, increasing male, female and minority interest in science, creating a technologically literate workforce and providing recognition for outstanding achievement by both students and teachers. More than 250,000 students and 35,000 teachers on 8,000 teams from all 50 states competed in 450 regional, state and national Science Olympiad tournaments last year.

[Million Women Mentors](#), an initiative of STEMconnector, is a national and global movement founded in 2014 to spark the interest and confidence in women and girls to pursue STEM careers and leadership opportunities through the power of mentoring.

[mHUB](#) is the nation's largest and fastest-growing innovation center focused on physical product development and manufacturing and ensures that the Midwestern manufacturing industry continues to accelerate, grow and thrive.

[The Illinois Science & Technology Institute \(ISTI\)](#) is a STEM-focused nonprofit that provides programs and partnerships to connect companies with classrooms. ISTI supports schools and companies who want to impact the next generation of innovators, to build a stronger, more inclusive talent pipeline in Illinois. We are a bridge between the classroom and the real world that facilitates collaboration between students and industry mentors.

Attachments: Congratulatory Letter from U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth

Photo of Stand Up for STEM Award Presentation – Pictured from L to R: Dan McManus, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Office of Senator Tammy Duckworth; Representative Mary Edly-Allen; Becky Goldberg, Program Manager, Illinois Science and Technology Institute