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**Local Students Awarded California STEM Education Tour**  
**August Trip Includes Tours of IDEO, rLoop, San Francisco’s Exploratorium, and Pixar Animation Studios**

Philadelphia, PA, July 12, 2016—Inspired by the creativity and innovation featured throughout The Franklin Institute’s current special exhibition *The Science Behind Pixar*, three Philadelphia students will travel to San Francisco, California this summer to experience a five-day whirlwind STEM education tour. The trip will include exclusive access and tours of major technology centers and some of the most innovative companies in the world such as IDEO, rLoop, TE Connectivity in Menlo Park, San Francisco’s Exploratorium, and Pixar Animation Studios—as well as meet and greets with scientists and engineers based throughout one of the nation’s premier epicenters of science and technology—Silicon Valley. Tours of some of the most iconic attractions in San Francisco including a climb up the “Crookedest Street in the World” Lombard Street; lunch in the world-famous Fisherman’s Wharf; a tour of Alcatraz Island; and visits to Ghirardelli Square, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco Zoo and California Academy of Sciences will round out the trip which begins August 2. Engineered by The Franklin Institute and *The Science Behind Pixar* local exhibit sponsor TE Connectivity, the trip is designed to foster an ongoing appreciation for the importance of STEM education and insight into the career paths that can follow which are vital to the growth and advancement of our nation and world.

The Franklin Institute’s Dr. Frederic Bertley, Senior Vice President of Science and Education will join the students on the August tour. “There really isn’t a more solid way to showcase the importance of STEM education and the benefits of pursuing STEM careers than providing these students direct exposure to some of the top places in the country for science and technology production, and face-to-face meetings with some of the world’s most renowned scientists,” Bertley explained. “At this pivotal time in these students’ lives, this trip can be a game-changer.”

The winners were selected among a pool of entries from students enrolled in two of The Franklin Institute’s youth education programs STEM Scholars and Partnerships for Achieving Careers in Technology and Science (PACTS), as well as the Institute’s partnership high school Science Leadership Academy (SLA). Students were asked to submit 1200-word essays in response to each of the following questions: What are the important characteristics needed to become successful leaders in the STEM community? As a future STEM leader, what
current societal challenge would you be interested in solving and why? What impact has STEM had on the field of animation? What sparks your interest now? Why should you be chosen for this trip? A talented pool of experts, engineers, scientists and educators from The Franklin Institute and TE Connectivity selected the following students who will be awarded the all-expense paid STEM education tour through California for 5 nights and 4 days: Kate Kopf, Khafren Smith, and Matthew Milligan.

The winning students were chosen based on a combination of essay submission and in-person interviews in which they communicated more personal information such as future career aspirations and mentors who had important impacts on their lives. Kate Kopf, age 16, is a student at Science Leadership Academy (SLA) and is also enrolled in The Franklin Institute’s STEM Scholars program. Kopf has an interest in film and design and appreciates the way in which design “can make every step of our days easier and more attractive, whether it’s through something huge like urban design, or something small, like a pencil.” And the same goes for film, Kopf writes in her essay. Khafren Smith, age 16, is a current student of The Franklin Institute’s PACTS program. Smith has future aspirations of pursuing a career in the field of mechanical engineering and cites a major trigger was receiving his first complex LEGO® set at the age of 6, after which he “ended up destroying the instruction build set and instead made my own design.” Matthew Miligan is a student at SLA who, at the early age of 15, already recognizes the global challenges surrounding healthcare and medicine and has future goals of applying his passion for genetics and biology toward becoming a doctor or genetic researcher someday with hopes of “identifying a problem and solving it, to make the world a better place.”

As a global technology leader in connectivity and sensor solutions, TE’s culture is defined by innovation, collaboration and creative problem-solving. “Encouraging kids to pursue STEM education and careers ensures the next generation will be able to invent a bright future,” said Amy Shah, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer at TE Connectivity. "At TE, we believe every connection counts, which goes beyond our technology solutions. The learning opportunities and personal connections made during this experience will open these students' worlds to new possibilities."

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The Science Behind Pixar was developed by the Museum of Science, Boston in collaboration with Pixar Animation Studios. The Franklin Institute is the first stop on a national tour and is home to the exhibition through September 5. For more information, please visit https://www.fi.edu/exhibit/science-behind-pixar.

Support for The Science Behind Pixar
The Science Behind Pixar is funded through support by Google, members of the Science Museum Exhibit Collaborative (SMEC), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

About Pixar Animation Studios
Pixar Animation Studios, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company, is an Academy Award®-winning film studio with world-renowned technical, creative and production capabilities in the art of computer animation. The Northern California studio has created some of the most successful and beloved animated films of all time, including "Toy Story," "Monsters, Inc.,” “Cars,” "The Incredibles," "Ratatouille," "WALL•E," "Up," "Toy Story 3,” “Brave,” and “Inside Out.” Its films have won 30 Academy Awards® and have grossed more than $10
billion at the worldwide box office to date. “Finding Dory,” the latest feature film is the largest domestic hit in the history of Pixar, grossing $422.5 million to date.

About The Franklin Institute
Located in the heart of Philadelphia, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning. Pennsylvania’s most visited museum, it is dedicated to creating a passion for learning about science by offering access to hands-on science education. For more information, visit www.fi.edu.

About TE Connectivity
TE Connectivity (NYSE: TEL) is a $12 billion global technology leader. Our connectivity and sensor solutions are essential in today’s increasingly connected world. We collaborate with engineers to transform their concepts into creations – redefining what’s possible using intelligent, efficient and high-performing TE products and solutions proven in harsh environments. Our 72,000 people, including over 7,000 engineers, partner with customers in close to 150 countries across a wide range of industries. We believe EVERY CONNECTION COUNTS – www.TE.com.