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## **CT Science Center hosting cyber-challenge**

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Nearly 200 Connecticut high school freshmen will spend Monday competing in mental gymnastics and exploring the Connecticut Science Center in Hartford, courtesy of the state's biggest business lobby, the science center and others.

The second year of the Connecticut Business & Industry Association's Education Foundation's Cyber-Challenge places high-school students in teams to answer complex questions posed by four of Connecticut's leading businesses.

Questions center on health care, energy conservation, aerospace, and other issues, and industry representatives serve as coaches and judges for the project.

Participating companies are Northeast Utilities, General Electric, United Technologies Corp., and Pfizer, each of which will design a set of questions that requires students to work collaboratively; use social media and wikis for peer-to-peer information sharing and problem-solving; and capitalize on video and animation to showcase their findings.

Students will present their final projects at a statewide event in May 2011 at the science center.

By supporting projects that build young people's interest and proficiency in STEM subjects and aligning classroom learning with real-world issues, Cyber-Challenge addresses concerns about the growing demand for and projected shortage of workers with strong science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills. It also prepares students for rigorous eleventh- and twelfth-grade Advanced Placement courses offered at their schools.

The program is funded by the National Science Foundation's Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) grant; the Connecticut Community College's College of Technology Regional Center for Next Generation Manufacturing; and EASTCONN, a public, nonprofit.

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