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LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

**For immediate release:**

March 13, 2014

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## **Lindenwood University to Participate in Innovative STEM Education Program**

**St. Charles, Mo.** - Lindenwood University has committed to partnering with Matter, a local organization dedicated to advancing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education and careers, to introduce the Academy of Racing Science to middle schools throughout the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. The innovative program brings STEM curricula to life for secondary school students through interactive experiences at Pole Position Raceway in St. Louis, Mo.

“Our team set out to find activities that young people like to do on weekends and build STEM curricula around them,” said Brad Nuccio, president of Matter. “We discovered Pole Position Raceway and knew it was perfect. Kids were completely engaged and our Lindenwood University partners immediately saw the opportunity to create real-world science experiences around racing.”

As part of the partnership, key Lindenwood faculty members will work with Matter and STEM educators to develop lesson plans related to Missouri Learning Standards and Next Generation Science Standards STEM curricula. Students from participating schools will then apply those lessons through hands-on activities at Pole Position Raceway.

“Students at the middle school level are typically exposed to STEM subjects through primarily classroom learning, which may not be sufficient in itself anymore moving forward,” said Terry Stewart, EdD, assistant dean of educational leadership at Lindenwood. “The Academy of Racing Science is something new that will expose students to authentic learning experiences designed to inspire their interest in STEM subjects and encourage their consideration of careers in those fields.”

The program will be piloted at Pole Position Raceway, 8800 Watson Road in St. Louis, Mo., from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2. Thirty-five teachers, 11 principals, and four superintendents are registered to participate. A second test program will take place in early May for 60 students and their teachers.

“We will take students and instructors through an example lesson, they’ll go out on the track and drive the lesson, and then we’ll gather their feedback,” said Stewart. “The goal is to make any necessary adjustments before full implementation of the initiative takes place across all participating schools in fall 2014.”

Stewart said approximately 2,500 middle school-aged students are expected to participate in the program during the 2014-2015 academic year, a number that will likely grow to more than 3,000 students the following year. Participants will likely come from the Fort Zumwalt, St. Charles, Lindbergh, and Webster Groves School Districts.

Lindenwood faculty members will conduct ongoing evaluations of the project to assess changes in student awareness regarding the application of STEM concepts and to report on possible STEM instructor preparation modifications.

To learn more about the Academy of Racing Science, contact Nuccio at [nuccio@whywematter.org](mailto:nuccio@whywematter.org) or (303) 396-9200. For more information about Lindenwood’s involvement in the program, contact Stewart at [tstewart@lindenwood.edu](mailto:tstewart@lindenwood.edu) or (636) 949-4656.

**-more-**

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Lindenwood University, founded in 1827, is an independent liberal arts university offering more than 120 graduate and undergraduate programs in diverse areas of study in traditional and accelerated formats.

Lindenwood operates residential campuses in historic St. Charles, Mo., and Belleville, Ill., as well as numerous extension sites throughout the St. Louis Metropolitan Area.

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