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Mass Insight Education & Research launches “Science from Home” for Advanced Placement (AP) Biology students in eight Boston high schools

The unique partnership, funded in part by the Massachusetts Life Science Center, provides hands-on biology labs developed by miniPCR bio.

Oct. 7, 2020 –Boston– Two hundred twenty-five individual lab kits are being delivered to high schools across Boston as part of Mass Insight Education & Research (Mi) Advanced Placement (AP) STEM & English program. Partnering with miniPCR bio, a cutting-edge manufacturer dedicated to making science accessible to everyone anywhere, Mi is piloting the *Science from Home: Lab Kits for Distance Learning* program in AP Biology classes in eight Boston public high schools this fall. The pilot program is supported in part by a grant from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC).

Recognizing the need to provide AP students with consistent learning opportunities aligned with challenging AP Biology curriculum, Mi got to work on a plan to support students in AP Biology classes with lab experiments that can be completed at home. miniPCR bio has developed a series of labs designed to give students safe, at-home interactive-lab experiences that maintain standards-based and grade-appropriate science education. Based on a collaborative research initiative between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Northwestern University, miniPCR bio developed the BioBits[®] lab that use cell-free technology to allow students to investigate fundamental biology concepts with minimal equipment. This unique solution is designed to foster academic equity and advance learning during the first half of the school year. Research shows that hands on learning is proven to maximize the comprehension and retention of rigorous science curriculum.

There are three lab kits that students will complete at home with the guidance of their AP Biology teachers.

Leslie Prudhomme, Mi’s Senior Content Director for AP Sciences and a former AP Biology teacher, has spearheaded the effort to get lab kits into students’ hands. “The kids are our top priority,” said

Ms. Prudhomme. “The question wasn’t are we going to be able to help them get the quality science education they need in the fall semester, it was how are we going to get this done?”

“Now more than ever, the work of our partners such as Mi, is essential to help breakthrough the barriers being faced by our diverse student populations,” said interim MLSC President and CEO Damon Cox. “The MLSC is proud to provide funding toward this effort to aid distance learning and support a broader shared goal of fostering education equity in the Commonwealth.”

The eight Boston high schools receiving kits are: Brighton High School, Charlestown High School, East Boston High School, Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, Excel High School, John D. O’Bryant School of Mathematics and Science, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, and New Mission High School.

As job opportunities surge in the technology and life sciences sectors, developing a diverse talent pipeline to meet the current and future workforce needs is a priority for the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center and Mi.

For more information on the Science from Home program, contact Peter Morton at pmorton@massinsight.org.

About Mass Insight’s AP STEM & English program:

Mi’s [AP STEM & English program](#) partners with high schools in order to diversify and expand AP classrooms – providing teachers with high-quality professional development opportunities and students with additional learning time and exam preparation in STEM subjects as well as financial assistance for AP exams. Our program seeks to bolster Massachusetts’ pipeline of talent contributing to the STEM workforce by setting students on the path for college and career success. Over its 12-year history, our program has had a significant impact on the expansion of STEM education in Massachusetts, as well as the expansion of opportunities for rigorous and game-changing academics for underserved students.

About the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center:

The [Massachusetts Life Sciences Center](#) (MLSC) is an economic development investment agency dedicated to supporting the growth and development of the life sciences in Massachusetts, home to the most verdant and productive life sciences ecosystem in the world. Through public-private funding initiatives, the MLSC supports innovation, research and development, commercialization, and manufacturing activities in the fields of biopharma, medical device, diagnostics, and digital health. Since its creation in 2007, the MLSC has strategically deployed more than \$796 million in Massachusetts, through a combination of grants, loans, capital infrastructure investments, tax incentives, and workforce programs. These investments have created thousands of jobs and propelled the development of new therapies, devices, and scientific advancements that are improving patient health and well-being in Massachusetts and beyond.