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CHABOT SPACE & SCIENCE CENTER TACKLES THE GENDER GAP IN TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE

— *Techbridge Program Hosts Workshop on Green Building Construction, April 4, 2005* —

01 April 2005 -- (Oakland, CA) While academics debate about the gender gap in science and technology, recently sparked by comments from Harvard University President Lawrence Summer, Chabot Space & Science Center's Techbridge program has been doing something to increase the number of females interested in science and technology. Role models are vital to the program and on **April 4, 3:30 – 5:30 pm** at Oakland Technical High School, Luci Tyndall, CIO of Swinerton, Inc., will be conducting a session on green construction using solar panels, efficient roofing tiles and glazing, and sod roofs.

Techbridge is a multifaceted after school program designed to enhance girls' interest and skills in science, technology, and engineering. Girls are introduced to various applications of technology as they work on projects based on their interests. Projects include programming, digital photography, kit building, soldering, dissection, and creating web pages.

“The program serves as a bridge, supporting girls' involvement in science, technology, and engineering. It works with girls at a critical period when they have important decisions to make that will affect their academic success and career options,” says Linda Kekelis, project director. Techbridge serves 250 students annually and operates at 11 elementary, middle, and high schools in the Oakland, San Lorenzo, and Emery School Districts and also at the California School for the Blind in Fremont.

Role models are the best ambassadors for providing academic guidance and expanding girls' career options. They can show by their example, the value of taking advanced math and science classes, persevering through challenges, and participating in internships and summer programs in science, technology, and engineering.

The program is funded by the Gordon & Betty Foundation, Microsoft, and Juniper Networks. “We are very grateful to these partners for their generous support of Techbridge that allows us to serve girls from underserved populations,” says Etta Heber, Director of Programs at Chabot. “Many of today's youth, especially those from low socioeconomic families, do not receive adequate academic and career counseling to make well-informed decisions about career options. The generous support from our partners is enabling us to serve many young women in our community with afterschool programs, guidance, role models, work-site visits, and much more.”

For more information, call (510) 336-7332, or visit www.techhbridgegirls.org

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