







Tri-County STEMersion 2025

BERKELEY • CHARLESTON • DORCHESTER



WHAT IS **STEM**ERSION?

Tri-County STEMersion is a unique, hands-on professional development program that connects local educators with regional industries to bridge the gap between education and industry. Over the course of the summer institute, teachers from Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties step out of the classroom and into local worksites to experience firsthand the careers, technologies, and skill sets driving our economy.

Bridging the gap between education and industry

Through a series of company tours, industry panels, and interactive activities, educators gain a deeper understanding of what today's students need to succeed in tomorrow's workforce. These real-world experiences serve as the foundation for STEM-based lesson plans and classroom projects that participants design during the program.

Each educator is tasked with creating curriculum materials aligned with their experience—lessons that highlight relevant technical and soft skills, showcase local career opportunities, and help students connect what they're learning in school to the real world around them.

The STEMersion experience is not only eye-opening for teachers, but also transformative for the future—bringing relevance, engagement, and career readiness into local classrooms. By equipping educators with firsthand industry insight, STEMersion ensures that the next generation is more informed, more inspired, and better prepared to enter a competitive workforce.

HOW IT WORKS

Applications to participate in Tri-County STEMersion open at the start of each calendar year, with priority given to Title I educators, followed by equal consideration for applicants from across Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties. Due to record interest in 2025, a waitlist was implemented for the first time—underscoring the growing demand for this transformative experience. Returning participants have the opportunity to serve as STEM Ambassadors, supporting the program's delivery and mentoring new attendees.

This year, the Institute transitioned from separate sessions for teachers and counselors to a structure centered around four high-demand career pathways: manufacturing, logistics, medical, and information technology. Educators selected their preferred pathway and engaged in targeted sessions featuring company presentations, on-site tours, panel discussions, and hands-on activities tailored to that sector.

Each participant developed curriculum materials aligned with their pathway experience, integrating both STEM and soft skill needs identified by industry partners. Projects were presented at the end of the week to a panel of education and industry leaders, and are now available for use throughout local schools to support career-connected instruction.

53%

of 2025's participants represented Title I schools



WHO WE ARE

Now in its 8th and largest year, Tri-County STEMersion continues to serve as a vital bridge between education and industry in the Charleston region. Launched in 2018 by the Dorchester Economic Development Corporation and the South Carolina Department of Commerce, the program has grown into a regional collaboration supported by the economic development offices of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties.

In 2023, the Planning Committee expanded to include representation from all four local school districts—Berkeley County, Charleston County, and Dorchester Districts Two and Four—deepening the program's educational impact.

What began with just a dozen educators has evolved into a flagship summer experience, providing teachers with direct exposure to local industries, workforce needs, and in-demand skills. Armed with this insight, educators return to the classroom better equipped to guide students toward career pathways that align with our region's growing economy.



BERKELEY COUNTY SC
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHARLESTON COUNTY • SC
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Dorchester County
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

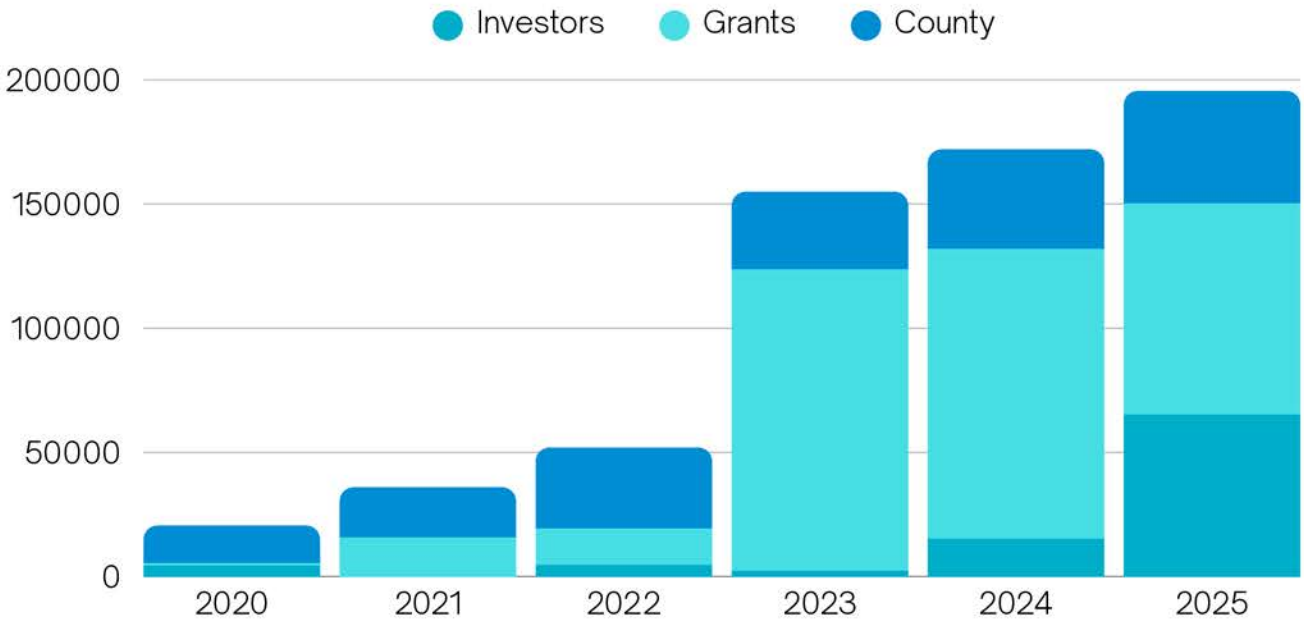
THANK YOU

To our 2025 Investors and Grantmakers who made the STEMersion Institute possible.

Special thanks to the College of Charleston for offering 3 hours of graduate professional credit to participants of the 2025 STEMersion Institute.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In addition to the foundational support provided by each county's economic development office, STEMersion is made possible through **grant funding** and the generous contributions of **private investors**. With interest and participation growing year over year, securing annual increases in funding has become a top priority to sustain and expand the program's impact.



8

New funding sources including 2 new grants

$1600

per participant to run the institute each year

$150k

in new funds needed to meet anticipated 2026 demand

Expenses for the STEMersion program can be grouped into 5 primary categories:

- Recruitment & Outreach - on-location school presentations to enhance exposure
- Marketing & Promotions - website development, advertising, print, and displays
- Event Supplies - including meals, rentals, speakers, and activity materials
- Transportation - buses required to transport attendees to and from site tours
- Stipends - educators receive a stipend for their time and lesson plan development

MEASURING PROGRESS





NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES.....38

PARTICIPATING EDUCATORS & COUNSELORS.....153

PARTICIPANTS RETURNING AS AMBASSADORS.....13

LESSON PLANS DEVELOPED.....171

GROUP PROJECTS CREATED.....31

EDUCATORS RECEIVING GRADUATE CREDIT..... 25

CONFIDENCE IMPLEMENTING STEM IN THE CLASSROOM.....97%

CONFIDENCE IMPLEMENTING AI IN THE CLASSROOM.....88%

FAMILIARITY WITH LOCAL EXISTING INDUSTRY.....98%

INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING AGAIN.....99%

PROJECTED REACH: STUDENTS, PARENTS, EDUCATORS....48,634

REPORT CARD

HERE'S WHAT PARTICIPANTS HAD TO SAY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE THIS YEAR

"The regular school day leaves little to no time for collaborating with tri-county peers, much less industry professionals. Thank you for providing access to both of these contacts."

Teacher, Jerry Zucker Middle School of Science

"I loved the practical tools, information about career opportunities for my students, feedback from businesses about what type of skills they are looking for, and networking with the community for better relationships between school and business."

Counselor, William Reeves Elementary

"Awesomeness, informative, knowledgeable."

Teacher, St. John's Christian Academy

"Seeing the overall economy in the Charleston area was eye opening. Sometimes I get involved with everyday activities and fail to see what is right here. STEMersion gave me a holistic view of what is here in our backyard."

Teacher, Charleston County School of the Arts

"STEMersion is constantly improving. I can't wait to see what happens next year."

Teacher,
Stratford High School



WHAT'S NEXT

With a vision to position STEMersion as a state and national model for transforming education-to-workforce connections, the program will continue building its reputation, expanding partnerships, and securing the resources needed for sustainable growth. By strengthening its network of industry, education, and community partners, STEMersion aims to deepen its impact, reach more educators, and further prepare students to thrive in a rapidly evolving workforce.



Increase Funding

To sustain the high quality and impact of STEMersion while continuing to grow participation, expanding funding sources is essential. Increased support from local investors and sponsors—alongside annual grant awards—will provide the resources needed to maintain an exceptional program experience and reach even more educators and students each year.

Expand Attendance

STEMersion has set a new three-year goal to engage 500 educators annually by 2028. Expanding participation will extend the program's reach into more classrooms, equipping thousands of students with the knowledge, skills, and connections they need to confidently pursue career or education pathways after graduation.

Yearlong Engagement

STEMersion hopes to strengthen its impact by further tracking and supporting the implementation of STEM-based lesson plans throughout the school year. By providing ongoing guidance and resources, the program will help educators bring their industry experiences to life in the classroom—ensuring students benefit from career-connected learning long after the Institute concludes.

Explore STEAM

STEMersion will look to explore STEAM pathways by incorporating the arts and hospitality—two prominent and growing sectors in the tri-county area. By connecting educators with these industries, the program can highlight additional career options that blend creativity, culture, and service, ensuring students are aware of the full range of opportunities available in our region.

WHO PARTICIPATED

TOURS

Berkeley Electric Cooperative
Bosch
Kion
Naval Information Warfare Center
Santee Cooper
Scientific Research Corporation
SHL Medical
South Carolina Ports Authority
Sportsman Boats
Trident Medical Center
Trident Technical College
Volvo
Walmart Distribution Center

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Berkeley County Schools
Charleston County Schools
Dorchester District Two
Dorchester District Four

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Berkeley County Economic Development
Charleston County Economic Development
Dorchester County Economic Development
Berkeley County School District
Charleston County School District
Dorchester District Two

PRESENTERS

Advanced Technology International
ATI Foundation
Berkeley Electric Cooperative
Bosch
Briteline
Charleston Southern University
Chris Singleton
Eaton Aerospace
Ecosteris
ECPI
FHI
Google
Kion
Larry Collett Consulting Group
Life Cycle Engineering
Maritime Association
Mercedes
Modus21
MUSC
Naval Information Warfare Center
Newport News Shipbuilding
Nucor
Palmetto Railways
Santee Cooper
SC Competes
SC Logistics
SC Manufacturing Alliance
SC Ports Authority
SC Power Team
Scientific Research Corporation
SHL Medical
Sportsman Boats
Summerville Medical Center
Thorne
Title AI
Trident Medical Center
Trident Technical College
Volvo
Walmart Distribution Center

SCHOOLS

Academic Magnet High School
Alston Middle School
Atlantic Collegiate Academy
Baptist Hill Middle High School
Berkeley High School
Berkeley Middle School
Camp Road Middle
Cane Bay High
Cane Bay Middle
Charleston Charter School for Math and Science
Charleston County School of the Arts
Chicora Elementary
College Park Elementary
College Park Middle School
Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies
Cross High School
Daniel Island School
Daniel Jenkins Academy
Deer Park Middle
Dorchester Academy
Dorchester County Career and Technology Center Summerville Campus
Dorchester County Career and Technology School Dorchester Campus
East Cooper Center for Advanced Studies
Eugene Sires Elementary
Flowertown Elementary
Fort Dorchester High School
Goose Creek High
GREEN Charter School Lowcountry
Gregg Middle School
Hanahan High School
Haut Gap Middle School
Jerry Zucker Middle School of Science
Joseph Pye Elementary
Laing Middle School of Science and Technology
Lambs Elementary
Liberty Hill Academy
Lowcountry Acceleration Academy
Lucy Beckham High school
Morningside Middle School,
Moultrie Middle School
North Charleston Elementary
North Charleston High School
Northwoods Middle School
Oakbrook Elementary School
Oakbrook Middle School
Oceanside Collegiate Academy
Philip Simmons High
Philip Simmons Middle
R.B Stall High School
River Oaks Middle School
Rollings Middle School of the Arts
Sedgefield Middle School
Spann Elementary
St. John's Christian Academy
St. John's High School
St. Stephen Middle School
Stratford High School
Summerville High School
Timberland High School
Wando High School
West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies
West Ashley High School
Westview Middle
William M. Reeves Elementary School
Woodland High School









402 N Main Street
Summerville, SC 29483

www.TriCountySTEMersion.com

@TriCountySTEMersion