

STEM Sports® Audible Aids Education

Teaching STEM literacy through the fun of sports and creative and strategic educational lessons

by Tyler Butler

► STEM Sports® is committed to the educational enrichment of youth. Its focus on analog technology has empowered this commitment. Through a double-play combination of physical activity and cognitive thinking, the organization provides a comprehensive approach. Preparing students for future careers, STEM Sports is providing a turnkey, standards-aligned, K-8 supplemental curricula to enhance students' STEM skills.

"My students had the opportunity to participate in the STEM Soccer program. I have spent two years with most of these students and this experience was the first time I have seen them truly invested and engaged in the learning process. My classroom became student-centered, where they were controlling the discussions, and inquiry that followed the modules, not me," shared Haley Mercy, a teacher at Mesquite Junior High School.

By combining the fun of sports and creative and strategic educational lessons, STEM Sports has devised an entirely new way to teach STEM literacy, retention and passion. Lessons use various sports as the real-life applications to teach science, technology, engineering and math in classrooms, after-school programs and camps around the globe. And with the shortage of skilled workers qualified to fill STEM jobs, this curriculum will help children explore the occupations available to them, through a sports lens.

"STEM Sports uses sports for real-world application, strengthens 21st century skills and integrates the Engineering Design Process with its curriculum. This STEM.org Accredited™ Educational Experience accomplishment will serve as an inspiration to others who aspire to be the best and reaffirms your ability to captivate those who value STEM in their communities," Andrew Raupp, shares founder and executive director of STEM.org.

In March 2020, the pandemic forced STEM Sports to critically review how it was able to help educators. With students leaving the classroom, parents were put into action to help continue education efforts at home. Teachers, too, were at a disadvantage. After all, their curriculum was designed to be delivered with students at their desks and not at the dining room table at home.

These unforeseen circumstances forced STEM Sports to call an audible. At which point, it pivoted and launched a nationwide public relations campaign offering lessons for free. STEM Sports recognized this would aid parents, the primary target for this campaign. However, the company's leadership recognized its core customers were also in need. STEM Sports' next objective was clear: Deliver content virtually for teachers.

The traditional curriculum offered by STEM Sports was intended to be delivered in a hands-on approach, where most of the learning occurs on the field or court of play. While some



digital assets such as videos and assessments have always been available, the cause relies on play and physical activity as key components to the learning process. With students at home and being taught on Zoom, Microsoft Teams and the like, STEM Sports had to meet them where they were.

By developing and creating robust digital presentations for every single module, STEM Sports digitized its worksheets. This provided the option to share printed curriculum manuals to students, enabling a pass-through to share these valuable teachings. "Our focus is on ensuring elementary and middle school-aged students enjoy learning the science that is behind all sports," said STEM Sports President and CEO Jeff Golner. "Our STEM curriculum creates an engagement with young students that will perpetuate their continued education and subsequent career potential in STEM fields."

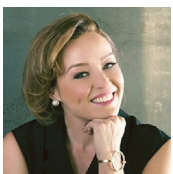
Expansion of these efforts will focus on curriculum kits to Title 1 Schools and scholarships to students to empower them to further their educations. In our own Valley, STEM Sports has been hard at work aiding causes in need. It has donated materials to Special Olympics Arizona. This collaboration will explore how the STEM Sports curriculum can meet the needs of its athlete populations. It looks to next partner with Boys and Girls Clubs of Arizona and Valley of the Sun United Way to explore additional ways that its curriculum can benefit youth.

STEM Sports has also served to usher in further innovation through its sponsorship of The Counting Bee™. The Counting Bee is an annual, fast-paced, exciting STEM competition that reveals the fastest human counters in different age categories around the world. Mathletes race to compute as many numeric answers as possible for each level within a 15-second window. Each level increases in difficulty and, once a cumulative total of all levels scores is assessed, state-by-state and country-by-country competitions will determine overall Counting Bee World Champions by age groups. Through these partnerships and others, STEM Sports will continue to support communities by aiding student learning with action and education. ■

WHY STEM?

- 15 of the fastest-growing careers require a background in math or science.
- 93 out of 100 STEM jobs pay above the national average.
- 80% of all professions are expected to require STEM skills in the next decade.
- There has been a 17% increase in STEM-related jobs as compared to 9.8% in other professions.

stemsports.com



Tyler Butler is the chief social impact officer for the Weedmaps' corporate portfolio where she leads programs that positively impact humanity. She is also the founder of 11.11CoLab and is often cited as a subject-matter expert by *Forbes*, *SHRM*, *Entrepreneur*, *US News & World Report* and more.