

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Introducing The Amazing Brain: Science City's Largest Indoor Exhibit, Courtesy of the Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains Competition

Grandview C-4 Students Celebrate the Opening of their Million-Dollar Exhibit

KANSAS CITY, Missouri — Surrounded by their school district's cheerleaders, drumline, choir and proud fans, 17 elementary students from the [Grandview C-4 FOCUS program](#) took the stage in an event typical of a big win in a professional sporting event. Today, this energy-filled crowd was celebrating the winners of the [Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains](#) and the \$1 million exhibit they inspired: [The Amazing Brain, Science City's largest indoor exhibit](#).

"To this see this much excitement and community support around a STEM competition in our region is inspiring — and a great sign for the future of Kansas City," says Ray Kowalik, chairman and CEO, Burns & McDonnell.

With a mission to inspire the next generation of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) professionals, Kowalik says Battle of the Brains is a passion project at Burns & McDonnell, where student teams compete to transform their idea into a \$1 million, permanent exhibit at Science City.

Since the [Grandview team won the competition in November 2017](#), STEM professionals at Burns & McDonnell and Science City have donated more than 3,800 hours on designing, constructing and branding the exhibit.

"We think it's important for the students to understand all aspects of a project, so we provide regular updates from engineers, designers and construction professionals — our entire team," Kowalik says. "We also take the students out of the classroom to where the project is designed and built — from the boardroom of Burns & McDonnell to the manufacturers of the exhibit pieces. It's an immersive experience designed to introduce them to STEM in a unique way, and hopefully get them on the path to a STEM career."

"This experience has been a game-changer for our entire district," says Dr. Vicki Adams, FOCUS teacher, Grandview C-4 District, whose team also earned a \$50,000 grant from the competition. "Thanks to our grant, we built a new learning lab that is equipped with everything from MacBooks and drones to a 3D printer and ozobot robots. We tie everything to STEM — and the students love it!"

The Amazing Brain is the fifth exhibit from the Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains program at Science City. The 2,800-square-foot exhibit explores the body's command center — where it forms memories, feels emotions, learns new things and so much more. Designed to exercise the 3-pound organ in your head, The Amazing Brain contains 14 unique exhibit pieces, including:

- **READY, SET, RECALL** is a colorful, fast-paced demonstration of your brain calling your memory network into action. Alone or with a group, see how well you can follow a racing pattern of lights and sounds until you make a mistake or win.
- **BALANCE ME** tests the teamwork between your brain and body. How long can you stay on an unsteady platform before you lose your balance?
- **THE NOSE KNOWS** sniffs through a library of different scents and tests how well your brain interprets the smells, from a rose to a skunk.
- **MINDBALL** challenges your ability to relax your way to victory. The billions of neurons in your brain talk to each other through electrical pulses — brain waves that are measured in this exhibit with a technology called EEG (electroencephalography) feedback.
- **LIE DETECTOR** tests your partner to see if you can fool or will be fooled. But watch out — your brain may release cortisol when you lie, leading to physical reactions like sweating and a rapid heartbeat.

“Out of nearly 100,000 square feet of hands-on, interactive exhibits in Science City, a full 50 percent of that space was born in the imaginations of Kansas City kids thanks to the Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains competition. Nearly 20,000 students from 55 school districts have participated in the competition and benefited from this immersive, educational opportunity. That’s the power and importance of two organizations coming together and making a profound impact on the community,” says George Guastello, president and CEO, Union Station.

Guastello says since the launch of Battle of the Brains in 2011, attendance at Science City has rocketed by 120 percent and membership is at an all-time high of 10,000 family households. “Every day we have visitors from different school districts, states — even countries. They are all discovering STEM in a way that is fun and memorable. And the best part about our internationally-awarded Science City is it’s always evolving, meeting the needs of kids, families and educators alike,” says Guastello.

Union Station officials are already searching for the perfect spot for the next student-inspired exhibit. In late 2018, Union Station formalized the science center’s partnership with Burns & McDonnell — renaming it, [Science City Powered by Burns & McDonnell](#). The firm committed to investing up to \$3 million more over the next five years, bringing the total investment to more than \$8 million. The package promises two more Battle of the Brains competitions, with the first kicking off this fall.

To learn more about the Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains competition, visit www.botbkc.com.

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About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies made up of 7,000 engineers, architects, construction professionals, scientists, consultants and entrepreneurs with offices across the country and throughout the world. We strive to create amazing success for our clients and amazing careers for our employee-owners. Burns & McDonnell is 100 percent employee-owned and is proud to be on *Fortune’s* 2019 list of 100 Best Companies to Work For. For more information, visit burnsmcd.com.

About Science City

Internationally awarded for “Visitor Experience” by ASTC and regionally awarded in 2017 and 2018 “Favorite Family Friendly Attraction” by Visit KC Visitors Choice Awards, Science City powered by Burns & McDonnell is named one of the country’s TOP 25 science centers. Annually, it educates and entertains hundreds of thousands of science-thirsty children of all ages. Kansas City’s Science Center is THE place for inquisitive young minds to create, explore, and experiment with the BIG world of science through hands-on learning and non-stop fun. Featuring over 200 interactive exhibits and host to countless STEM-based events -- including the annual Greater Kansas City Science & Engineering Fair -- Science City leads the region in recognition from educators, parents, caregivers AND children alike. Continually evolving and always inventing new ways to make science meaningful and fun, Science City has become THE regional destination for families, groups, special events and even “Science City On The Road” outreach. Union Station Members enjoy Science City visits free of charge. To learn more, please visit ScienceCity.com.