

STEM CareerX

2025-2026



Rigetti



Type Five



Ambi Robotics



Magnetic Tides

California State University East Bay
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THE PARTNERSHIP

The Institute for STEM Education at Cal State East Bay developed the STEM CareerX project as part of a collaboration with Bayer, the City of Berkeley Office of Economic Development, Berkeley Startup Cluster, and Berkeley High School Career Technical Education (CTE) .

MAIN GOALS

The main goals of this project are to expose historically underrepresented students in STEM to diverse STEM-based applications and careers in their community, empower and inspire them to pursue STEM education pathways, and strengthen the long-term connection between Berkeley High School CTE and local STEM companies.

KEY FINDINGS

Participation Overview

During the 2025-2026 school year, STEM CareerX connected 52 students and 4 educators from Berkeley High School with STEM professionals working in their local community. Through visits to six STEM companies, students gained first-hand exposure to a diverse range of STEM fields, including quantum computing, renewable energy, robotics and automation, neuroscience-based medical technology, acoustics and audio engineering, and architectural design and construction.

In total, the program facilitated 108 student-visits, with more than half participating in more than one company visit. Twenty-five of the 52 participating students completed the end-of-year survey. More than half of survey respondents (52%) reported interacting with three STEM companies through the program, while others participated in one or two company engagements. This repeated engagement allowed students to learn about a variety of STEM careers, workplace environments, and educational pathways.

Participating students represented several Berkeley High School groups, including the National Society of Black Engineers Jr. (NSBE), the Hispanic Engineering and Science Club (HES), CAD students, Robotics Club members, and students enrolled in Mechatronics courses.

Company	Participants	Who are the students?
September 2025 - May 2026		
Rigetti	22 Students 3 Educators	National Society of Black Engineers Jr. Club (NSBE) Hispanic Engineering and Science club (HES)
Form Energy	21 Students 2 Educators	National Society of Black Engineers Jr. Club (NSBE) Hispanic Engineering and Science club (HES)

Company	Participants	Who are the students?
Type Five	18 Students 2 Educators	CAD Class
Magnetic Tides	15 Students 1 Educator	National Society of Black Engineers Jr. Club (NSBE) Hispanic Engineering and Science club (HES)
Meyer Sound	7 Students 1 Educator	National Society of Black Engineers Jr. Club (NSBE)
Ambi Robotics	25 Students 2 Educators	National Society of Black Engineers Jr. Club (NSBE) Hispanic Engineering and Science club (HES) Robotics club Mechatronics class

How many STEM companies did you meet through the program this year?
(This includes both companies you visited and companies that came to the school.)

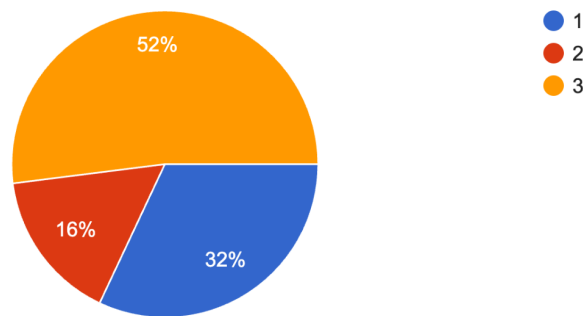


Figure 1

Quantitative Outcomes

Twenty-five students completed the end-of-year survey, providing feedback on the impact of the STEM CareerX program. Students responded to a series of reflection statements using a four-point scale: *Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, *Agree*, and *Strongly Agree*. Their responses indicate that students viewed the visits as useful opportunities to learn about STEM careers and real world applications of STEM.

Key findings:

- **100% of respondents** agreed or strongly agreed that the visits helped them see how STEM is used in the real world, with 68% strongly agreeing, affirming the program's core goal of connecting classroom learning to authentic workplace contexts.
- **100% of respondents** would recommend company visits to other students, and more

than three-quarters (76%) strongly agreed. This is the highest rating of any item, indicating that students see the experience as worth advocating for among their peers.

- **100% of respondents** agreed or strongly agreed that they learned about different pathways into STEM careers and that they understand more about the types of jobs available in STEM fields.
- **92% of respondents** agreed or strongly agreed that they feel more confident they could work in a STEM related job in the future.

Qualitative Outcomes

Students' written reflections echo the survey numbers and show how the program shaped their thinking. Three themes stood out in students' responses:

- **The breadth of STEM careers.** "One thing I learned was that there are many jobs and many pathways in STEM." This is the most common takeaway. Students were surprised by how many different roles exist inside a single company, and by the many different paths professionals took to get there, from varied college majors to unexpected career changes.
- **Professional mindsets.** "The power of perseverance. A lot of startups and companies initially fail but the ones who put in a lot of effort and work despite setbacks are usually the ones who succeed." Students took away lessons about perseverance, taking initiative, and asking questions. Many were struck by stories of startups that failed before succeeding, and by the message that success is rarely a straight line.
- **Seeing STEM in action.** Concrete, real world applications left a lasting impression. Students highlighted the science in designing sound systems, carbon fiber in everyday products, and the use of software in designing a tiny house.

The program helped some students discover new options, and helped others test and sharpen their learning and career goals. One student wrote: "It gave me more of an insight into what I could possibly want to do in the future and showed me things I would like in my future job/career and things that I wouldn't like."

Visit Spotlight: Ambi Robotics

The visit to Ambi Robotics was special: it marked the second time students visited the company, making it an example of the continuous, long-term relationships STEM CareerX aims to build between Berkeley High School and local STEM companies.

Students had the opportunity to hear directly from Ambi Robotics' Co-Founder & VP Operations, who shared the company's journey, including how Ambi Robotics adapted its systems in response to changes in the market, shifts in the broader world, and the company's own evolving understanding of customer needs as it implemented its technology. This gave students a

rare, candid look at how a real company learns and changes over time.

Students saw the robotic systems in action and chatted with employees in small groups and one on one, giving them direct, personal access to professionals across different roles.

The returning visit also highlights what these long term relationships mean for educators. Teachers who visit a company more than once can bring real life examples back to the classroom and share them with students who were unable to join the trip, extending the program's reach well beyond the visit itself.

CONCLUSION

In the 2025-2026 school year, STEM CareerX delivered on its three main goals. The program exposed 52 students, from NSBE Jr., HES, CAD, Robotics Club, and Mechatronics, to a wide range of STEM careers in their own community, from quantum computing to acoustics to robotics, through 108 student-visits across six companies.

The survey results suggest that the program increased students' awareness of STEM careers and helped them connect classroom learning to real-world applications. Every respondent agreed the visits helped them see how STEM is used in the real world, and nearly all came away more confident they could work in a STEM career. Just as importantly, students' reflections show the visits met them where they were, helping some discover new possibilities while helping others sharpen and confirm their goals.

Finally, the program strengthened the long term connection between Berkeley High School and local STEM companies. The return visit to Ambi Robotics shows what these relationships can become: deeper experiences for students, and lasting resources for educators who carry real world examples back to their classrooms.