MEDIA RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 3, 2022
Media contact: Jamie Preto Hepworth (jamie.pretohepworth@hclibrary.org or 410.924.5871); Christie Lassen (443.474.0740 or christie.lassen@hclibrary.org)

HCLS to unveil new mobile STEAM classroom on August 6

(Ellicott City, MD) – Howard County Library System (HCLS) is adding a mobile classroom to its educational resources that will be unveiled at its East Columbia Branch on Saturday, August 6. The ribbon cutting ceremony will take place at 10:30 am as part of the STEAM Carnival, a free event for families focusing on science, art, and technology activities that will run from 9 am until 1 pm.

Congressman John Sarbanes, County Executive Calvin Ball, HCLS Board of Trustees Vice Chair Phillip Dodge, and HCLS President & CEO Tonya Aikens are among those who will speak at the ribbon cutting.

Named the STEAM Machine, this new mobile classroom will make science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics education available to all students, especially those from disconnected communities by taking classes and resources to locations throughout Howard County.

The STEAM Machine is a 33’ Farber diesel bus featuring a climate-controlled classroom that seats 12 students and is equipped with Wi-Fi, laptop computers, two 49” LED TVs, sound system, and video production equipment. A 55” LCD monitor and two awnings allow classes to be taught and activities conducted outside.

Tonya Aikens, President & CEO of HCLS, notes, “Howard County Library System is coordinating with community partners to schedule STEAM Machine classes across the county. Our goal is to bring opportunities for hands-on STEAM education to students from under resourced communities and families who, for an array of reasons, are often unable to come to our branches.”

HCLS’ STEAM curriculum seeks to create a hands-on learning environment for students in grades K through 12. In its classes, students become scientists investigating real-world phenomena and engineers designing solutions to real-world problems. Howard County Library System received experiential science kits from BGE, Exelon Foundation and National Energy Development’s Energizing Student Potential, a STEM-based energy program.

The STEAM Machine is funded in part by an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant through the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the Maryland State Library Agency.

###