Joint News Release

BASF Media Contact:
Roberto “Bob” Nelson
Tel.: (973) 245-5230
Email: roberto.nelson@basf.com

Fairleigh Dickenson University:
Dina Schipper
Tel.: (201) 692-7032
Email: schipper@fdu.edu

S.T.E.M. School Chattanooga HS student Haley Rigsby embraces the challenges of chemistry and business at BASF’s Science Academy

FLORHAM PARK, NJ, August 16, 2018 – Haley Rigsby of S.T.E.M. School Chattanooga will start her college career with a three-credit advantage and a background in the business of chemistry as a graduate of BASF’s eighth annual Science Academy.

Rigsby was among 20 high school seniors from around the United States, Canada and Mexico who earned the opportunity to participate in the program designed to prepare students for a career in Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM).

The two-week summer science program, develop by BASF Corporation and held at Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) in Madison, New Jersey, provides students the opportunity for students to increase their knowledge of chemistry and learn marketable business skills. Working in teams, students use BASF chemistry to formulate their own personal care products – hair gel, shampoo and lotion – and develop a marketing plan. At the end of the program, the student teams presented their product to a panel of BASF executives and FDU academic leaders.

“We want to ignite a passion in students to follow their interests in science and adequately prepare the next generation of leaders in innovation,” said Robert Gagliano, Site Director for the BASF facility in Chattanooga. “Our two-week program also promotes the business skills that can help our graduates succeed in the real world.”

Following the curriculum theme, “From Molecules to Marketplace,” students gained hands-on
experience in college chemistry labs, while developing a marketing strategy to link their product to the consumer. Students experienced chemistry in action by visiting the BASF Research and Development labs in Iselin, New Jersey, and Tarrytown, New York. They also spoke to cosmetic chemists and subject matter experts to learn about careers in chemistry.

“Exposure, not just to chemistry or science, but also to the fundamentals of entrepreneurship is what this program is all about,” said Dr. Brian Olechnowski, Program Director at FDU. “It’s exciting to be a part of the experiences and progress the students make during the intensive two-week program.”

“My favorite aspects of BASF’s Science Academy were making memories and exploring New York City with the friends I’ve made through the program,” Rigsby said.

Students graduate from the program with three transferable college science credits to encourage their pursuit in a STEM field. In addition, FDU offers Science Academy alumni $5,000 scholarships if they elect to attend FDU in the fall of 2019.

Two Science Academy alumni have returned to BASF through the summer hire internship program and the Professional Development Program (PDP). Last year, Science Academy class of 2011 alumnus Kevin Chao joined BASF as a full-time PDP employee in Beaumont, Texas, and is currently working at the BASF facility in Chattanooga, Tennessee. This fall, 2013 Science Academy graduate Michelle West will join BASF as a PDP. Other successful alumni are attending universities and pursuing degrees in math, chemistry, engineering, biology, medicine, psychology, education and business.


Suggested caption:  S.T.E.M. School Chattanooga student Haley Rigsby gained hands-on science and marketing experience at BASF’s 2018 Science Academy.

About BASF
BASF Corporation, headquartered in Florham Park, New Jersey, is the North American affiliate of BASF SE, Ludwigshafen, Germany. BASF has more than 18,200 employees in North America, and had sales of $17.9 billion in 2017. For more information about BASF’s North American operations, visit www.basf.com.

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country in the world. Our portfolio is organized into five segments: Chemicals, Performance Products, Functional Materials & Solutions, Agricultural Solutions and Oil & Gas. BASF generated sales of about €64.5 billion in 2017. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (BAS). Further information at www.basf.com.

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