

## LI BUSINESS

# LI college gets STEM grant

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Farmingdale State College has received a \$100,000 grant from New York State to encourage local students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

The board of directors of Empire State Development, the state's primary business-aid agency, approved the grant last week.

The money will reimburse half of the \$200,000 spent by the college to purchase two mobile computer labs and put on events to serve low-income students.

"STEM education is vital if institutions like Farmingdale and others are going to equip the next generation to compete on a global basis," Farmingdale State president W. Hubert Keen said yesterday.

"It's especially important to engage students from high-need schools so they can see the connection to a STEM career. That's why our mobile labs are so useful," he said.

Farmingdale is among several local universities, including Stony Brook and Hofstra, that have launched initiatives in recent years to boost the number of STEM graduates to meet employer needs.

Farmingdale's one-day events, called STEM Diversity Summits, have featured research exhibits done by stu-



Students from the Zion Youth & Family Community Center of Elmont use computing devices from a mobile STEM lab at Farmingdale State College yesterday.

dents and presentations by business people about sustainable energy and biotechnology.

Each mobile lab consists of a teaching podium, large computer monitor, software and laptop computers for students to use.

The labs have been used in academic camps at Farmingdale State and the Family Life Center in Wyandanch. Yesterday, students from Elmont's Zion Youth & Family Community Center were using them to find which STEM jobs suit them the best.

The grant was recommended by the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council, a group of business executives, union leaders and educators. Keen serves on the council but did not participate in the funding decision.