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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Idaho STEM educator award deadline extended

BOISE, Idaho (May 30, 2018) — The Idaho STEM Action Center has extended the nominations deadline for the 2018 STEM educator of the year award, officially known as the INDEEDS Awards, to June 17 at 11:30 p.m. MDT.

Short for the Industry's Excellent Educators Dedicated to STEM, the annual awards program honors teachers who champion science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and connect students with industry leaders to mentor projects and provide invaluable career guidance.

The STEM Action Center and program sponsors will select two winners — one teaching in grades K-6 and another working in grades 7-12. In addition to the accolade, both winners will receive a check for \$2,000 and up to \$2,000 in funding to attend any STEM-related national conference, plus their schools will each receive \$2,000 to fund science, technology, engineering, and math initiatives.

The Idaho Technology Council will bestow the INDEEDS awards at its 2018 Hall of Fame gala Oct. 17 at Boise Centre.

Visit the STEM Action Center's grants page at STEM.idaho.gov/grants to nominate a teacher. According to Dr. Angela Hemingway, executive director of the STEM Action Center, the nomination process has been simplified and even self-nominations are encouraged.

“The INDEEDS Awards are a fantastic opportunity to highlight STEM educators and the amazing and important work they’re doing in our communities,” Hemingway says. “Students need the opportunities to experience hands-on STEM learning, which fosters 21st-century skills like critical and creative thinking, problem solving, innovation, and collaboration — skills even students who don’t pursue STEM careers will find invaluable.”

She says fostering a STEM-educated workforce and connecting industry and education is important to ensuring Idaho’s continued economic prosperity.

“Idaho is the fastest-growing state in the U.S., our tech sector is the second fastest-growing nationwide, and our state boasts the third-fastest job growth,” Hemingway says. “However, we had nearly 6,000 unfilled STEM jobs in 2017 representing about \$355 million in lost personal wages and more than \$20 million in lost state tax receipts.”

Meanwhile, she says the Idaho Department of Labor anticipates robust job growth in STEM careers by 2024: 14 percent in computing, 9 percent in engineering, and 23 percent in advanced manufacturing, including 3D printing and design.

Former Idaho Gov. Dirk Kempthorne created the INDEEDS awards in 2000. Initially called the Idaho STEM Educator of the Year Award, Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter incorporated the award presentation into ITC’s Idaho Innovation Awards in 2013. In 2015, the governor assigned the program to the STEM Action Center, which renamed it INDEEDS to emphasize the important role industry plays in fostering a well-educated workforce.

About the Idaho STEM Action Center

The Idaho STEM Action Center was created in 2015 because Idaho citizens are not entering the STEM pipeline fast enough to meet current and future Idaho workforce needs. Its goals are to coordinate and facilitate implementation of science, technology, engineering, and math programs, align education and workforce needs, and increase awareness of STEM learning and careers throughout Idaho. The organization is working with industry, government, educators, and students to develop new resources and support high-quality teacher professional-development opportunities to foster a STEM-educated workforce that ensures Idaho’s continued economic prosperity. Visit STEM.Idaho.gov for more information.

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