



CONTACT:

Angela Hemingway, 208.332.1726, angela.hemingway@STEM.idaho.gov

Tony Harrison, 208.880.9814, tony@COMMposition.biz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Idaho STEM Action Center awards 70 grants worth \$266K

BOISE, Idaho (Feb. 7, 2019) — The Idaho STEM Action Center has awarded 70 grants worth more than one-quarter million dollars to schools, districts, libraries, and out-of-school and youth-enrichment programs statewide to advance science, technology, engineering, and math education.

The organization, part of the Executive Office of the Governor, awarded a total of \$266,445.58 via two grant programs: 16 Computer Science Grants worth \$142,007.14 and 54 PK12 Innovative STEM Project Grants representing \$124,438.44.

The CS Grants will fund hardware and software primarily used for coding, such as tablets, laptop and desktop computers, drones and TC-AYS aircraft, robots, and gear that supports platforms like ALICE, Arduino, Blocksmith, CAD, Code.org, and VR. Students will use these devices to learn coding, software-development tools, and such languages as Java, C++, Python, and Scratch. Applicants could request up to \$10,000.

The PK12 Innovative STEM Project Grants will fund creative science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and computer-science programs that are hands-on or project-based. The grant dollars will fulfill everything from 3D-printing initiatives, cybersecurity exercises, robotics and drone programs, and stop-motion animation classes to BrickLAB design challenges, aquaponics and meteorological projects, and STEM-related field trips to state parks — even Bogus Basin SnowSchool science camps. Applicants could request up to \$2,500.

Demand for the grants, which the STEM Action Center began offering in 2017, remains strong. “This time total requests for our CS and PK12 grants exceeded \$556,000,” STEM A.C. executive director Dr. Angela Hemingway said. “It’s a competitive process and we had to decline 48 requests — two out of five applicants — but with additional industry support we could more fully fund the needs of Idaho’s STEM community.”

Dr. Hemingway said this underscores the need for the Idaho STEM Action Center Foundation. Her agency created the nonprofit a year ago to offer organizations and individuals a way to make tax-deductible donations to the STEM Action Center and enhance the investment the state has made in Idaho’s STEM community. The foundation is accepting donations, and to date it has raised nearly \$200,000 through grants, gifts, and sponsorships. In total, the STEM Action Center has raised more than \$1.5 million from third parties to enhance its efforts to support STEM opportunities statewide.

Offering grants to boost STEM learning opportunities is critical to the state’s continued economic prosperity, according to Dr. Hemingway.

“Idaho is the fastest growing state in the nation. We have the third-fastest job growth and the second fastest technology sector growth,” she said. “Meanwhile, Idaho’s unfilled STEM jobs leaped from 3,800 in 2016 to 6,300 in 2018, which represents nearly \$413 million in lost personal wages and more than \$22 million in lost state tax receipts. The Idaho Department of Labor predicts upwards of 100,000 STEM jobs will exist in Idaho by 2024. These jobs will represent \$6.5 billion in personal income and almost \$350 million in tax revenue if Idaho’s workforce is posed to fill them. If we do nothing these unfilled jobs could represent a devastating blow to our economy.”

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.

Computer Science Grant recipients

CS Grant recipients include Boise High School (Boise), Bonneville Online High School (Idaho Falls), Buhl Middle School (Buhl), Driggs Elementary School (Driggs), Falcon Ridge Charter School (Kuna), Garden Valley District Library (Garden Valley), Heritage Academy (Jerome), Horizons Lifestyle and Education Team (Cascade), Marsing Middle School (Marsing), Moscow High School (Moscow), Priest Lake Elementary School (Priest Lake), Russell Elementary School (Moscow), Sandpoint High School (Sandpoint), South Hills Middle School (Twin Falls), Teton Elementary School (Rigby), and West Minico Middle School (Paul).

PK12 Innovative Stem Project Grant recipients

PK12 grant recipients include 21st Century Community Learning Center (Marsing), Aberdeen Middle School (Aberdeen), American Falls Academy (American Falls), Ammon Elementary School (Ammon), Bear Lake School District (Montpelier), Bellevue Elementary School (Hailey), Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area (Boise), Bonneville Online High School (Idaho Falls), Bridgewater Elementary School (Idaho Falls), Buhl Middle School (Buhl), Camelot Elementary School (Lewiston), Cascade Elementary School (Cascade), Cascade School District (Cascade), Central Elementary School (Nampa), Chaparral Elementary School (Meridian), Council Elementary School (Council), Ernest Hemingway STEAM School (Ketchum), Falls Valley Elementary School (Idaho Falls), Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council (Boise), Gooding Public Library (Gooding), Hawthorne Middle School (Pocatello), Hillsdale Elementary School (Meridian), Horizon Elementary School (Boise), Hubbard Elementary School (Kuna), Idaho Falls Public Library (Idaho Falls), Jenifer Junior High School (Lewiston), John Brown Elementary School (Rathdrum), Kuna High School (Kuna), Lake Hazel Middle School (Boise), Lakeland School (Athol), Madison Junior High School (Rexburg), Mullan Trail Elementary School (Post Falls), Nezperce Elementary School (Nezperce), Nezperce High School (Nezperce), Nezperce School District (Nezperce), North Idaho STEM Charter Academy (Rathdrum), Orofino Junior/Senior High School (Orofino), Pepper Ridge Elementary School (Boise), Project Impact STEM Academy (Kuna), Rendezvous Upper Elementary School (Driggs), Rigby Middle School (Rigby), Rolling Hills Public Charter School (Boise), Sage International School (Boise), Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Tribal Youth Education Program (Pocatello), Southside Elementary School (Cocalalla), Sugar-Salem High School (Sugar City), Syringa Middle School (Caldwell), Tautphaus Park Zoological Society (Idaho Falls), Temple View Elementary School (Idaho Falls), Teton Elementary School (Rigby), Vision Charter School (Caldwell), and West Minico Middle School (Paul).

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 STEM programs, align education and workforce needs, and increase awareness of STEM 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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