



CONTACTS:

Jacey Cavanagh
MakerMinded
jacey.wilkins@gmail.com
(610) 637-2796

Joe Steele
LIFT
jsteele@lift.technology
(313) 309-9132

John McFarlane
Idaho STEM Action Center
makerminded@STEM.idaho.gov
(208) 231-1466

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LIFT and STEM Action Center Celebrate Top MakerMinded Schools in Idaho

Digital learning platform recognizes student achievements in advanced manufacturing and STEM

BOISE, Idaho (May 8, 2019) — [LIFT](#) – Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow, a Detroit-based national manufacturing innovation institute and member of [Manufacturing USA](#), and the [Idaho STEM Action Center](#) today announced the winning schools of the Gem State's 2018-2019 inaugural MakerMinded competition, which expands students' and schools' access to world-class advanced manufacturing and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning experiences through an online platform.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense's National Defense Education program, MakerMinded launched in Idaho in the fall of 2018 to inspire more middle and high school students to pursue advanced manufacturing careers and equip them with 21st-century skills in-demand at Idaho's 1,600 manufacturers that currently employ nearly 70,000 people.

The following three schools are being recognized for their outstanding performance in MakerMinded, and will each receive \$4,000 from the Idaho STEM Action Center to build or enhance a STEM or advanced manufacturing program:

- Basin Elementary School (Idaho City, Boise County)
- Burley Junior High School (Burley, Cassia County)
- Idaho City High School (Idaho City, Boise County)

Four other Idaho schools involved in MakerMinded were recognized and will receive support from the Idaho STEM Action Center to build or enhance a STEM or advanced manufacturing program:

- White Pine Charter School (Ammon, Bonneville County) - \$1,500
- Canyon Ridge High School (Twin Falls, Twin Falls County) - \$1,000
- Heritage Academy (Jerome, Jerome County) - \$1,000
- Upper Carmen Public Charter School (Carmen, Lemhi County) - \$1,000

These schools are just a few of the many middle and high school students across Idaho participating in cutting-edge education programs and activities through MakerMinded, and becoming the future workforce Idaho needs to maintain and grow its manufacturing economy. Idaho's MakerMinded students are also poised to become the talent the nation needs to meet its most complex defense technological and manufacturing challenges.

“STEM education is a critical part of ensuring the next generation of Idaho citizens is equipped with the skills Idaho businesses need in their workers,” Idaho Gov. Brad Little said. “The State of Idaho is proud to partner with LIFT and its MakerMinded program to expand access to STEM education opportunity for Idaho students.”

“The demand for jobs in STEM fields continues to increase at a rapid pace in Idaho,” Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, said. “Educating Idaho’s youth on these topics at an earlier age will inspire students to pursue careers in these fields. I congratulate the winners of this inaugural competition on their achievements in increasing students’ awareness of and preparation for STEM careers that are vital to Idaho’s infrastructure and growth.”

The nearly 200 active students and teachers from over 50 schools across Idaho are now part of a national MakerMinded network that includes schools in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, and West Virginia, where LIFT works with local partners to onboard schools and activate students’ participation. To date, over 6,000 students and teachers from over 500 middle and high schools are participating in MakerMinded nationally.

“With the manufacturing sector expanding in Idaho’s economy, we are focused on increasing students’ and schools’ participation in MakerMinded as a means to gain the skills and experiences students need to prepare for the manufacturing and STEM jobs of tomorrow,” STEM Action Center executive director Dr. Angela Hemingway said.

“These MakerMinded students in Idaho are becoming the next generation of innovators and makers,” said Emily DeRocco, vice-president, education and workforce development, LIFT. “They are living proof that we have the talent and the passion in our students to be a globally competitive manufacturing force—we just need to provide more opportunities for young people to access the right learning opportunities and hone their skills.”

Designed by LIFT and Tennessee Tech University’s iCUBE, MakerMinded directly links students to a diverse range of national and local advanced manufacturing programs, including manufacturing facility tours, gaming activities, and project-based learning. MakerMinded also includes a competition component, as students and schools receive points for each completed activity. Points are tallied on a real-time online leader board and the top schools are celebrated at year-end recognition events.

The 2019-2020 competition will commence this coming August 2019. Students, schools, employers and others interested in joining the Idaho MakerMinded campaign should visit www.ID.makerminded.com.

About LIFT – Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow

LIFT is a Detroit-based, public-private partnership committed to the development and deployment of advanced lightweight metal manufacturing technologies, and implementing education and training initiatives to better prepare the workforce today and in the future. LIFT is one of the founding institutes of [Manufacturing USA](#) and is funded in part by the Department of Defense with management through the Office of Naval Research.

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.