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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Emmett science teacher among 60 STEM Advocates nationwide**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 20, 2019) — Emmett High School science teacher Robin Wilson is one of 60 educators nationwide the Society for Science & the Public named as advocates to mentor underserved students and help them navigate science research competitions. Wilson will receive an all-expense-paid trip to attend training in Washington, D.C., and a \$3,000 stipend for ongoing training and support through the organization’s Advocate Grant Program.

Wilson was in Phoenix last week as the mentor of Emmett High School student Lukas Keller, who earned one of two Best of Fair awards at the 2019 Western Idaho Science and Engineering Fair in March and was competing at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.

The Society for Science & the Public Advocate Grant Program helps educators and scientists expand opportunities for underserved students who have the potential, yet lack the necessary resources, to succeed in STEM fields. Each advocate mentors a cohort of three or more students, providing support as they complete science research projects and apply to compete in science research competitions.

Last year Kamiah High School science teacher Janna Privette earned the same honor.

“It’s imperative that we make STEM education opportunities accessible to all students,” Maya Ajmera, president and CEO of the Society for Science & the Public and publisher of *Science News*, said. “By nurturing young, talented minds, the society’s advocate program is bolstering a pipeline of future scientific and engineering leaders.”

Dr. Angela Hemingway, executive director of the Idaho STEM Action Center, concurs.

“Science research competitions like our three regional Idaho Science and Engineering Fairs are important to Idaho’s future,” Dr. Hemingway said. “They offer students opportunities to engage in original research projects aligned with their interests and meet and learn with other motivated students in their area.

“Furthermore, the quality of the research Idaho students are conducting for these competitions is impressive and competitive at the international level. The technical skills gained from participating in these events, as well as the ability to communicate results, think deeply and critically about issues, and solve real-world problems, will serve these students well as they transition into the workforce.”

Dr. Hemingway said the Idaho Department of Labor predicts upwards of 100,000 STEM jobs will exist in Idaho by 2024. She said these jobs will represent \$6.5 billion in personal income and almost \$350 million in tax revenue if Idaho's workforce is poised to fill them.

The Western Idaho Science and Engineering Fair is one of three regional science fairs the STEM Action Center stages statewide each spring. The Coeur d'Alene Resort hosted the Northern Idaho Science and Engineering Fair March 1, Idaho State University hosted the Eastern Idaho Science and Engineering Fair in Pocatello March 8, and Boise State University hosted the Western Idaho Science and Engineering Fair March 15. The Best of Fair winners from the events competed at the international science fair last week, attending courtesy of the STEM Action Center.

***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](http://STEM.Idaho.gov) for more information.

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