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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Idaho STEM Action Center awards 33 CS device grants

BOISE, Idaho (Jan. 26, 2017) — The Idaho STEM Action Center just awarded nearly a quarter-million dollars in computer science device grants to schools and other public education programs throughout the state. The effort is part of Idaho’s Computer Science Initiative, which Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter proposed and the state legislature approved last session.

“The Computer Science Initiative is designed to provide employers with job applicants who have computer science training, certifications, and experiences that help them thrive in the workforce,” Gov. Otter said. “These grants are an important step in helping educators improve K-12 student understanding and experiences in computer science and coding while also building device infrastructure in Idaho.”

The grants will fund the exploration of CS principles, coding, and STEM curriculum by outfitting educational environments with makerspaces, rapid-prototyping centers, and innovation labs and essential equipment, including Chromebooks, notebooks, tablets, and handheld devices. Students will use these devices to learn software-development tools, frameworks, and languages, such as App Inventor, Java, Python, and Scratch.

STEM Action Center executive director Angela Hemingway said the Computer Science Initiative and CS device grants are critical to the intellectual and economic well-being of Idaho.

“Idaho’s tech sector is the second fastest-growing in the nation at 6.3 percent, and 80 percent of all jobs will require technology skills within the next 20 years,” she said. “Meanwhile, computer science is one of the fastest-growing fields in Idaho, and we expect it to grow 14 percent by 2024. Therefore, it is critical we give students the opportunity to get the hands-on, experiential computer science skills that will be required for our 21st-century workforce.

Totaling \$248,895.03, the 33 CS device grants are the second round of awards the STEM Action Center has announced in fiscal year 2017, which began July 1, 2016. Two weeks ago it announced it awarded 109 PK12 grants totaling \$253,448.59 to fund innovative science, technology, engineering, and mathematics projects.

During its 2016 fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2016, the agency delivered more than \$250,000 in aid to Idaho organizations and individuals to fund STEM efforts, including \$50,000 for PK12 grants and \$35,000 for family STEM events. Last year’s grants also fueled professional development opportunities for educators, as well as robotics and 3D design and fabrication competitions.

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The CS device grant recipients are:

Aberdeen Middle School, Aberdeen
Athol Elementary School, Athol
Blackfoot Charter Community Learning Center, Blackfoot
Camas County Junior High School, Fairfield
Canfield Middle School, Coeur d'Alene
Canyon Ridge High School, Twin Falls
East Junior High School, Boise
Emmett Middle School, Emmett
Fremont H Teed Elementary School, Kuna
Gizmo-CdA, Coeur d'Alene
Grangeville Elementary/Middle School, Grangeville
Greensferry Elementary School, Post Falls
Idaho Arts Charter School, Nampa
Idaho Falls School District 91, Idaho Falls
Idaho Science and Technology Charter School, Blackfoot
Jerome School District 261, Jerome
Juliaetta Elementary School, Juliaetta
Kershaw Intermediate School, Sugar City
Kimberly High School, Kimberly
Marsing Elementary School, Marsing
Marsing Middle School, Marsing
Middleton High School, Middleton
Moscow School District, Moscow
Nampa School District, Nampa
Nezperce School District, Nezperce
Payette River Technical Academy, Emmett
Pepper Ridge Elementary School, Boise
Purple Sage Elementary School, Middleton
Shelley School District 60, Shelley
Summit Elementary School, Jerome
Summit Hills Elementary School, Idaho Falls
Temple View Elementary School, Idaho Falls
Vision Charter School, Caldwell

About the Idaho STEM Action Center

The Idaho STEM Action Center is part of the Governor's Office and was created by state lawmakers in 2015 to enhance Idaho's STEM environment by connecting resources, students, educators and businesses. 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 to ensure Idaho's continued economic prosperity. Visit stem.idaho.gov for more information.

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