



MEDIA ALERT: May 11, 2021

Think Make Create Lab mobile makerspaces deploying statewide

WHO The Idaho Out-Of-School Network, Idaho STEM Action Center, University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development, Idaho State Department of Education, Idaho Division of Career & Technical Education, and Gizmo-CDA are collaborating on the Idaho STEM EcosySTEM's first initiative with help from INL, Micron, Optum Idaho, Sparklight, and TrailersPlus.

WHAT Via the Idaho STEM EcosySTEM, the Idaho Out-Of-School Network and its partners are creating, outfitting, and deploying a dozen mobile, pop-up makerspaces this spring to rural and underserved communities statewide and are unveiling the fleet's first five trailers at the event. This summer alone, more than 3,000 children will keep their busy minds and hands engaged via the Think Make Create Labs, which are equipped with fun arts and crafts supplies and tools that allow them to tinker, explore STEM concepts, collaborate, and problem solve.

WHEN Tuesday, May 11, 2021, from 3-5 p.m. MDT:

- **3:00 p.m.** — TMC Lab trailer roundup and mingling
- **3:30 p.m.** — TMC leadership partners will speak briefly
- **3:50 p.m.** — comments and ribbon cutting by Idaho Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra
- **4:00 p.m.** — youth activities, self-guided TMC Lab tours, and media interviews with program leaders and sponsors

WHERE Caldwell YMCA, 3720 S. Indiana Ave., Caldwell, ID 83605, in the west end of the parking lot

WHY STEM knowledge and skills are important to Idaho's future, because they're needed for critical and creative thinking, problem solving, innovation, and collaboration. Nineteen of Idaho's 20 hot jobs through 2026 require STEM skills, and STEM jobs pay about twice as much as non-STEM jobs. Among Idaho parents who were surveyed, 99 percent believe STEM skills will play an important role in the future, and within a decade 90 percent of jobs will require digital literacy.

HOW The Idaho STEM EcosySTEM is a network of partners from PreK-12 and higher education, out-of-school educators, business and industry, nonprofits, state agencies, and legislators, with the Idaho STEM Action Center serving as the backbone organization. It works to build awareness of and ensure equitable access to science, technology, engineering, and math education opportunities and careers. It also seeks to align STEM education with Idaho's current and future workforce needs, create successful metrics for STEM education and programming, and build momentum for STEM within the state and nationally.

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