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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Annual STEM Matters! celebration goes virtual

BOISE, Idaho (Feb. 1, 2021) — With the annual STEM Matters! celebration on hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Idaho STEM Action Center is staging online events this week highlighting how critical science, technology, engineering, and math is to the state.

Dr. Kaitlin Maguire, the STEM A.C.'s interim executive director, will livestream Idaho's first State of STEM address today at noon. In her budget presentation to the Idaho State Legislature's Joint Finance Appropriations Committee last Friday, she reported more students are enrolling in STEM courses.

"We are creating onramps for students into excellent paying jobs right here in Idaho," Dr. Maguire said. "In fact, year-to-year, more high school students are choosing to take STEM courses. Over 2,400 graduating seniors in 2020 were eligible to receive a STEM diploma for taking advanced classes in STEM subjects. This represents a 67 percent increase from 2019 and shows that students are choosing to take STEM coursework as they prepare to enter the workforce or attend post-secondary programs. These 2,400 students demonstrate the enormous potential STEM programming can have on our future workforce."

The agency will also post a STEM workforce highlight video with Kount vice president Kate Lenz to its [YouTube](#) channel and [Facebook](#) profile at 10 a.m. today as part of the STEM Matters celebration. And this afternoon CBS2 will provide a glimpse of the Treasure Valley via its STEM Action Drone at 2 p.m.

Dr. Maguire suggested students, parents, and educators follow the STEM A.C. on Facebook, because the agency will be hosting virtual events throughout the week. These include interviews with members of the Idaho State Legislative STEM Caucus, discussions with STEM industry leaders, and a look back at prior STEM Matters! celebrations at the Capitol.

For instance, Rathdrum educator Craig Peterson will discuss his externship with Idaho Forest Group last summer at 4:45 p.m. this Thursday. And CBS2 meteorologist Nate Larsen will conduct STEM@Home educational activities each morning all week long.

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Visit <https://stem.idaho.gov/stem-matters> or follow www.fb.com/IdahoSTEMAC for more details about this year's weeklong virtual celebration. Watch the agency's new "This is STEM" video in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) to learn more about the importance of fostering a workforce literate in science, technology, engineering, and math.

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 increase equitable access to STEM opportunities, align education and workforce needs, and amplify awareness of STEM throughout Idaho. The organization is working with industry, government, educators, and students to develop new resources and support high-quality professional-development opportunities to foster a STEM-educated workforce that ensures Idaho's continued economic prosperity.

Visit STEM.idaho.gov for more information, and visit <https://STEM.idaho.gov/support-us/foundation> to make a tax-deductible donation to the Idaho STEM Action Center Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, to enhance the investment the state has made in Idaho's STEM community. Contributions provide greater access to STEM camps for children, student competitions, and many other life-shaping programs.

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