



CONTACT:

Dr. Kaitlin Maguire, 208.631.7864, kaitlin.maguire@stem.idaho.gov

Erica Compton 208.994.2573, erica.compton@stem.idaho.gov

Tony Harrison, 208.332.1726, tony@COMMposition.biz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caldwell, Kuna youths win IDX 3D-printing competition

BOISE, Idaho (March 22, 2022) — Teams from Syringa Middle School in Caldwell and Project Impact STEM Academy in Kuna earned first place at the 2022 Idaho Exhibition of Ideas in the junior and senior divisions, respectively, March 12 at One Stone School in Boise. The event is one of two regional Idaho Exhibitions of Ideas, also known as IDX showcases, Idaho STEM Action Center stages annually.

IDX is the culmination of a project that began last summer when Idaho STEM Action Center trained and equipped teachers attending the annual i-STEM Institutes professional development conferences it offers at six locations throughout the state. Teachers attending the IDX strand returned home to assemble teams to vie in the 3D printing competition.

Per this year's IDX challenge theme, each team identified a space exploration issue that can be addressed using 3D printing and digital fabrication and developed and documented a product to help resolve it. The teams presented their solutions at IDX to a panel of judges and a public audience for review and feedback.

Little Einsteins, Syringa Middle School's all-girl team, designed a solution to help astronauts brush their teeth in zero gravity. Sixth-grade science teacher Kristy Rudan led the team, which was comprised of Adylene Amaya, Raeneasha Linze, Maritza Medina, and Natalia Valencia.

Awkward Turtles, Project Impact STEM Academy's team, conceptualized a trash-collecting spaceship that could harvest old satellites, rocketry, and other space junk. High school agriculture teacher Athea Prillaman led the team, which was comprised of Michael Domeny, Ava Percy, and Tyler Percy.

Both teams won a 3D printer (a \$350 value) provided by POWER Engineers and a \$250 cash prize, one donated by Cradlepoint and another by the Sahai Family Foundation.

- more -

Students from Basin Elementary School in Idaho City and West Junior High School in Boise earned second place in the junior and senior divisions, respectively. Both teams won a \$300 cash prize, one donated by Cradlepoint and another by the Sahai Family Foundation.

Makeshift Spaceships, Basin Elementary's team, designed an array of fidgets and games to help keep astronauts on the International Space Station entertained. Sixth-grade teacher ReBekha Lulu led the team, which was comprised of Brielle Harvey, Breeanna McKown, Iris Olvera, Blake Taylor, Bailey Vigeant, and Whitney Watson.

Intergalactic Mustangs, West Junior High's team, explored the idea of outfitting spaceships with solar sails. Retired school librarian Tina Roehr led the team, which was comprised of Tye Bayley, Ella Faler, Jovani Lopez, Will Peterson, Aubrey Sunderland, and Cailyn Sunderland.

Students from Pepper Ridge Elementary School in the West Ada School District and Gooding Middle School earned third place in the junior and senior divisions, respectively. Each team won \$250 cash from Idaho STEM Action Center's end of year giving campaign.

STARS, Pepper Ridge's team, focused on creating art in Zero-G, designing a special paint tray and brushes for astronauts aboard the International Space Station. Librarian Cheryl Fife led the team, which was comprised of Conrad Castleton, Carter Ecklund, Molly Hessing, Chloe Holyoak, Cody Johnson, Gabe Ronnow, and Kaitlyn Tepfer.

Space Magicians, Gooding Middle School's team, worked on a "cybertruck" concept for exploring and analyzing the surface of other planets. STEM teacher Rebecca Larsen led the team, which was comprised of Conner Barnett, Itzyana Barrios, Claira Burnett, De Gallup, Sebastian Gonzales, Evelyn Hocklander, Jhared Huarillocla, Lesli Lopez, Omar Mendez, and Liliana Nicholas.

Ten teams took part in the Treasure Valley showcase, with teams from Barbara Morgan STEM Academy in Meridian and Hawthorne Elementary School in Boise and two teams from Richard McKenna Charter School in Mountain Home also participating.

The STEM Action Center is hosting a regional IDX showcase at Idaho State University in Pocatello April 8. Three teams from North Idaho will compete virtually at that event. Statewide 34 organizations — including 200 students and 60 educators and coaches — are participating this year.

According to STEM Action Center executive director Dr. Kaitlin Maguire, competitions like IDX are important to the future of Idaho.

“IDX is designed to equip students with the practical, technical, and creative skills needed to engage with the real-world problems of today and tomorrow,” Dr. Maguire said. “Competitions like IDX help students develop durable skills like creative thinking, problem solving, innovation, and collaboration, plus it helps them understand the cognitive design process. Idaho employers value these skills, and these experiences better prepare students for future success in high-demand STEM careers.”

She said STEM jobs in Idaho are projected to grow 15.4 percent by 2030, outpacing the national average of STEM job growth at 10 percent.

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 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.

#