



CONTACTS:

Jacqui Mieksztyn
MakerMinded
jacqui.mieksztyn@gmail.com
(586) 524-4298

Joe Steele
LIFT
jsteele@almmii.org
(313) 309-9132

John McFarlane
Idaho STEM Action Center
makerminded@STEM.idaho.gov
(208) 231-1466

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIFT and STEM Action Center celebrate top MakerMinded schools in Idaho

*Digital learning platform recognizes student achievements
in advanced manufacturing and STEM*

BOISE, Idaho (May 12, 2020) — [LIFT](#), the Detroit-based national manufacturing innovation institute, and the [Idaho STEM Action Center](#) today announced the winning schools of the Gem State's 2019-2020 MakerMinded competition, which expands students' and schools' access to world-class advanced manufacturing and science, technology, engineering, and math learning experiences through an online platform.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense's National Defense Education program, MakerMinded launched in Idaho in the fall of 2018 to inspire more middle and high school students to pursue advanced manufacturing careers and equip them with 21st-century skills in demand at Idaho's 1,600 manufacturers that currently employ nearly 70,000 people.

Four schools are being recognized for their outstanding performance in MakerMinded, and will each receive cash awards from the STEM Action Center to build or enhance a STEM or advanced manufacturing program:

- White Pine Charter School (Ammon, Bonneville County) — \$3,500
- Basin School District grades 5-8 (Idaho City, Boise County) — \$3,000
- Syringa Middle School (Caldwell, Canyon County) — \$2,500
- White Pine STEM Academy (Ammon, Bonneville County) — \$2,500

Four other Idaho schools involved in MakerMinded were recognized for their participation and will receive support from the STEM Action Center to build or enhance a STEM or advanced manufacturing program:

- Heritage Academy (Jerome, Jerome County) — \$600
- Aberdeen Middle School (Aberdeen, Bingham County) — \$300
- Burley Junior High (Burley, Cassia County) — \$200
- New Plymouth High School (New Plymouth, Payette County) — \$50

- more -

According to Idaho Gov. Brad Little, these schools are just a few of the many middle and high schools statewide participating in cutting-edge education programs and activities through MakerMinded to create the future workforce Idaho needs to maintain and grow its manufacturing economy. He said Idaho's MakerMinded students are also poised to become the talent the nation needs to meet its most complex defense technological and manufacturing challenges.

"STEM education is a critical part of ensuring the next generation of Idaho citizens is equipped with the skills Idaho businesses need in their workers," Gov. Little said. "The State of Idaho is proud to continue partnering with LIFT and its MakerMinded program to expand access to STEM education opportunities for Idaho students."

More than 500 active students and teachers from 65 schools across Idaho are part of a national MakerMinded network that includes schools in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, and West Virginia, where LIFT works with local partners to onboard schools and activate student participation. To date, more than 7,500 students and teachers from more than 650 middle and high schools are participating in MakerMinded nationally.

"With the manufacturing sector continuing to play a critical role in Idaho's economy, we are focused on increasing students' and schools' participation in MakerMinded as a means to gain the skills and experiences students need to prepare for the STEM jobs of tomorrow," STEM Action Center executive director Dr. Angela Hemingway said.

Emily DeRocco, LIFT's senior talent strategist, concurred.

"These MakerMinded students in Idaho are becoming the next generation of innovators and makers," DeRocco said. "They are living proof that we have the talent and the passion in our students to be a globally competitive manufacturing force — we just need to provide more opportunities for young people to access the right learning opportunities and hone their skills."

Designed by LIFT and Tennessee Tech University's iCUBE, MakerMinded directly links students to a diverse range of national and local advanced manufacturing programs, including manufacturing facility tours, gaming activities, and project-based learning. MakerMinded also includes a competition component, with students and schools receiving points for each completed activity. Points are tallied on a real-time online leader board and the top schools are celebrated at year-end recognition events.

About LIFT

LIFT, operated by the American Lightweight Materials Manufacturing Innovation Institute, is the Detroit-based, public-private partnership between the Department of Defense, industry and academia, committed to the development and deployment of advanced manufacturing technologies, and implementing talent development initiatives to better prepare the workforce today and in the future. LIFT funded in part by the Department of Defense with management through the Office of Naval Research. Visit lift.technology or follow on LinkedIn at [LIFT](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lift) or on Twitter [@NewsFromLIFT](https://twitter.com/NewsFromLIFT) to learn more.

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.

###