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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**STEM Action Center brings award-winning trainings to Idaho educators**

BOISE, Idaho (March 9, 2017) — The Idaho STEM Action Center awarded grants of \$75,000 each to four proven programs to support the efforts of Gem State formal and informal educators to bring high-quality interdisciplinary science, technology, engineering, and math to their students. These programs aim to improve educator skills, knowledge, and practices to help them inspire and boost the performance and engagement of Idaho students in STEM.

This initiative focuses on trainings that reach across disciplines, which STEM Action Center executive director Angela Hemingway said reflects how professionals practice STEM in their careers. “It allows students to deepen their understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of STEM by utilizing skills across multiple subject areas,” she said.

The STEM Action Center collaborated with Change the Equation™, a coalition of corporate members working to ensure every young person in the nation is STEM literate. CTEq has developed STEMworks, a rigorous independent evaluation process to identify STEM programs that produce results.

“Working with CTEq, a panel of Idaho experts identified high-quality STEM programs that employ best practices, effectively engage all learners, produce strong outcomes, and have the capacity to expand anywhere in Idaho,” Hemingway said. “Building programs that work well in both larger cities and smaller rural communities can be challenging, but the four programs selected by the Idaho panel all presented sound plans to succeed in any Idaho community.”

She said it’s exciting to bring proven professional-development opportunities like these to Idaho educators.

“Idaho has an outstanding cadre of formal and informal STEM educators who are looking for ways to enhance their knowledge and skills so they can provide the best possible education for their students,” Hemingway said. “These specialized training opportunities will guide them in the integration of multiple STEM disciplines into the classroom so students see how STEM fits into all aspects of everyday life. Additionally, the approaches used by these programs promote critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration — skills even students who do not chose to pursue STEM careers will find valuable.”

The four programs are:

- **Achieving Student Success through Excellence in Teaching** will build informal and formal K-12 educators' understanding of the essential features of inquiry, misconceptions about inquiry, and the instructional focus on process skills that support implementation of Idaho science standards. ASSET will also help instructors learn how to better integrate English-language arts, history, and social studies into their science classes, making science more meaningful to students. The deadline to apply is April 7, 2017.
- **C-STEM** aims to transform computing, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education in both formal and informal education settings. C-STEM will work with formal middle and high school educators to integrate computer programming and robotics into STEM subjects through hands-on, personalized, and collaborative learning strategies. The deadline to apply is April 7, 2017.
- **Educurious** will provide formal public educators who impact students in grades 3-12 with strategies to effectively integrate 21st-century skills into science teaching by content integration — both across scientific disciplines and subject areas. The program will guide teachers to encourage students to work collaboratively, persist in their endeavors, communicate well, and integrate subject knowledge into creating solutions for authentic problems via a series of STEM problem- and project-based design workshops — all skills required in STEM fields. The deadline to apply is April 7, 2017.
- **Making Sense of Science** offers a comprehensive approach to educator training that focuses on science understanding through the integration of math, classroom practice, literacy, and pedagogical reasoning. Strengthening educator knowledge and skills fosters improvements in student science and math achievement and better prepares pupils for college and the 21st-century workforce. The approach is very effective for English-language learners and students struggling with literacy skills. The grant is open to informal and formal science educators who impact teachers of students in grades 5-9, and the deadline to apply is April 3, 2017.

Educators may apply for the grants at [stem.idaho.gov/grants](http://stem.idaho.gov/grants).

The STEM Action Center was created because Idaho citizens are not entering the STEM pipeline fast enough to meet current and future Idaho workforce needs. Its goals are to coordinate and facilitate implementation of STEM programs, align education and workforce needs, and increase awareness of STEM throughout Idaho. The STEM Action Center 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 that ensures Idaho's continued economic prosperity. Visit [stem.idaho.gov](http://stem.idaho.gov) for more information.

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