

MEDIA RELEASE

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State leaders show support at STEM Day at the Capitol

More than 150 Iowans visited today with state legislators about STEM efforts statewide

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa – More than 150 Iowans packed the Capitol Rotunda today to show their support for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) at STEM Day at the Capitol, an event coordinated by the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council.

Governor Terry E. Branstad and Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, joined by Sen. Tim Kraayenbrink, Sen. Bill Dotzler, Rep. Cecil Dolecheck, Rep. Dave Jacoby and Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson, all spoke about STEM education and its progress in Iowa.

"Educators deserve credit for implementing the high-quality STEM education programs delivered by the STEM Council in classrooms and other settings. I am proud that since 2012 more than 300,000 students have benefited from these programs," said Reynolds, STEM Council co-chair. "And, more of Iowa's business and industry leaders are either helping fund those programs or facilitate them as mentors every year. These school-business partnerships are critically important for their futures and to meet the Future Ready Iowa goal of 70 percent of the workforce having education or training beyond high school by the year 2025."

Dozens of legislators visited with 33 exhibiting groups, including students, teachers and other leaders representing organizations in PreK-12 to higher education and nonprofits to business and industry, to learn how they are shaping STEM-literate, workforce-ready citizens for Iowa with the help of the STEM Council.

Nelson also recognized the recipients of the 2017 I.O.W.A. STEM Teacher Award, sponsored by Kemin Industries, including:

- Keith Juelfs, fifth grade teacher at Morningside Elementary STEM School in Sioux City, Iowa
- Benjamin Jass, industrial technology teacher at Webster City High School in Webster City, Iowa
- Chelsie Slaba, science teacher at Dike-New Hartford High School in Dike, Iowa
- Brett Roberts, sixth grade science teacher at Shenandoah Middle School in Shenandoah, Iowa
- Heather Anderson, second grade teacher at Grant Ragan Elementary School in Waukee, Iowa
- Gregory Smith, industrial technology teacher at Davenport West High School in Davenport, Iowa

"We know the vast majority of our scientists found their inspiration to pursue STEM careers from a teacher," said Nelson, STEM Council co-chair. "These six educators from across Iowa represent their colleagues, schools and communities, and their profession superbly by striving each day to inspire their students about the importance of STEM and the careers to which it leads."

The annual event is coordinated by the STEM Council and sponsored by John Deere and Rockwell Collins.

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Established in July 2011 via Governor's Executive Order, the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council is a public-private partnership of educators, companies, and Iowa students and families addressing policies and programs designed to improve Iowa's educational system focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM Council works to engage and prepare students for a career-ready workforce path, regain our State's historic leadership position in education and provide a vital competitive economic advantage now, and for the future, to ensure that every Iowa student has access to world-class STEM education opportunities. The 47-member Council is co-chaired by Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds and Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson. For more information, visit www.iowaSTEM.gov.