

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 24, 2017

### **STEM Council to launch 15 more school-business partnerships in Iowa**

*Proposals to be an Iowa STEM BEST® Partner prepare students for career-readiness*

**CEDAR FALLS, Iowa** – The Iowa Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Advisory Council invites proposals from school-business partnerships across the state to compete for 15 Iowa [STEM BEST®](#) (Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers) awards.

STEM BEST, a STEM Council priority, drives community collaborations where schools work together with local employers to create work-based learning experiences linked to local business and industry applications. Applied learning, once the sole domain of career and technical education, expands to core mathematics, science and technology education tied to relevance in the workplace through STEM BEST partnerships.

"One way to grow Iowa's workforce is to first expose our students to the STEM careers available to them in the communities around them," said Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, co-chair of the STEM Council. "STEM BEST is all about students, teachers and businesses coming together to work on projects and find solutions to local issues, and in return, students gain career interests and employability skill sets before they even graduate high school."

Since 2014, the STEM Council has established [18 of these innovative models](#) across Iowa, now serving as examples for other communities to follow. From rural schools, such as Rock Valley and IKM-Manning, to urban settings, including Davenport and Des Moines, current STEM BEST models represent a variety of business and industry sectors across Iowa.

"Iowa businesses are reliant on a steady stream of interested and skilled employees, and STEM BEST is one effort we see strengthening communities across the state," said Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson, co-chair of the STEM Council. "Employers are helping grow their own workforce and building relationships with local educators who are ultimately equipping students to be the future innovators for the state and the world."

Beginning today, May 24, the STEM Council invites communities across Iowa to submit their proposal to build a STEM BEST model at [www.IowaSTEM.gov/STEMBEST/Proposal](http://www.IowaSTEM.gov/STEMBEST/Proposal). Any Iowa K-12 private and public schools or school districts are eligible to apply. All 15 awarded applicants will receive \$25,000 to be matched with local cost-share, each earning designation as an Iowa STEM BEST Partner. The application window will close on Friday, September 15, and recipients will be announced in late October.

To learn more about Iowa STEM BEST, please visit [www.IowaSTEM.gov/STEMBEST](http://www.IowaSTEM.gov/STEMBEST) or register today for "Fast-Track Iowa's Future" Conference on June 21 where many of the current models will be showcased: [www.IowaSTEM.gov/Fast-Track-Iowas-Future](http://www.IowaSTEM.gov/Fast-Track-Iowas-Future).

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#### **About the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council**

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 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 STEM Council is chaired by Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds and Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson. For more information, visit [www.lowaSTEM.gov](http://www.lowaSTEM.gov).