

MEDIA RELEASE

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Google and Verizon pledge \$40,000 to STEM Council for 'Code Iowa'

Investment supports opportunity for Iowa students to take part in worldwide focus on computer science

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa – The Iowa Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Advisory Council launches the third annual "Code Iowa" today in conjunction with Google and Verizon to bring computer science opportunities to students and educators throughout the state.

Google and Verizon recognize the need to expose young Iowans to computer science and information technology careers and contributed \$40,000 in support of the STEM Council's local campaign associated with Code.org's international effort called, the "[Hour of Code](#)." Last December, nearly 500 Iowa schools and informal groups and an estimated 590,000 Iowans took part in Code Iowa, which has continued to double in participation since it began in 2013.

"The sheer number of participants last year showed that so many Iowans grasp the amazing opportunities that computer science provides," said Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, co-chair of the STEM Council. "That is the very mission of the STEM Council—to create more opportunities for students to learn and to work with wonderful partners like Google and Verizon to boost the pipeline for more STEM-talented workers in Iowa, prominently including computer science."

According to Code.org data, Iowa currently has more than 3,700 open computing jobs with only 380 computer science graduates to fill them, which is three times the average job demand rate in Iowa. The STEM Council is aware of and working to address the supply-demand imbalance faced by Iowa IT employers through programs and policy solutions, including Code Iowa.

"No matter the industry, information technology knowledge and skills are a modern day employment prerequisite akin to reading and writing," said Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson, co-chair of the STEM Council. "From research to production to marketing and all facets of operations, computer science literacy has rapidly become a common denominator. Google and Verizon's support will help us inspire the young Iowans we need to pursue those jobs at our businesses."

This year, Computer Science Education Week is Dec. 5-11, 2016. Those schools and organizations that plan to participate in Code Iowa during that week can submit an application to the STEM Council to compete for one of six \$3,500 technology awards. Interested applicants can find that information at www.IowaSTEM.gov/CodeIowa and must complete the application by Friday, Nov. 18, 2016.

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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 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM Council works to engage and prepare students for a career-ready workforce path, regain the 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.IowaSTEM.gov.