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## **Kemin Industries, STEM Council honor six 2016 I.O.W.A. STEM Teacher Award recipients**

*Awardees from across Iowa receive recognition at Terrace Hill*

**DES MOINES, IOWA** – (Apr. 19, 2016) – The Iowa Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Advisory Council, along with [Kemin Industries](http://www.kemin.com), formally recognized the six 2016 I.O.W.A. STEM Teacher Award recipients during a reception hosted by Gov. Terry Branstad at Terrace Hill on Monday night.

The 2016 I.O.W.A. STEM Teacher Award recipients are:

- Dirk Homewood, Project Lead The Way and mathematics teacher, Cedar Falls High School
- Ed Birkey, technology and engineering teacher, Fort Dodge Senior High School
- Erin Wetzel, Project Lead The Way and computer teacher, Southwest Valley Middle School
- Kent Muyskens, science teacher, Carroll High School
- Reagan Boeset, 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade STEM teacher, Clear Creek Amana Middle School
- Ryan Lensing, science teacher, Dowling Catholic High School

The award, sponsored by Kemin Industries, was created in 2014 to celebrate one K-12 STEM teacher from each of the six STEM regions who exemplify I.O.W.A., being **I**nnovative in their methods, **O**utstanding in their passion for education, **W**orldly in how their students see that STEM is all around them and **A**cademic in engaging students both in and out of the classroom. Each recipient was nominated by a fellow educator, school administrator, student or parent and submitted an application that was evaluated by a panel of judges. Each received an award of \$1,500 with an additional \$1,500 designated for their classroom.

Alongside Gov. Branstad and STEM Council Executive Director Dr. Jeff Weld, STEM Council Co-Chairs, Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds and Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson, were on hand to present trophies and checks to each recipient. They expressed their admiration for the work each teacher does in their classrooms to inspire and engage students in STEM learning.

"Today's students hold the key to the future successes of Iowa and our economy, but our students can't get there without enthusiastic and engaged teachers that are making profound impacts in inspiring their students in STEM," added Lt. Gov. Reynolds. "It's wonderful to hear about the activities and projects our STEM teachers are facilitating in classrooms with Iowa students."

"There are so many incredible things happening in STEM classrooms across Iowa," said Dr. Nelson during the ceremony Monday night. "This award allows us to showcase teachers and the methods they are using in their classrooms every day to show students the endless possibilities that are available to them."

The ceremony was attended by nearly 150 STEM leaders and supporters from across Iowa. To learn more about the award please visit [www.stemaward.fluidreview.com](http://www.stemaward.fluidreview.com). For pictures of the event and of each recipient, please click [here](#).

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**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 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.iowaSTEM.gov](http://www.iowaSTEM.gov).

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