

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **STEM Council awards new STEM BEST Partners in Iowa**

*Ten school-business partnerships equipped to bridge the world of work to the classroom*

**CEDAR FALLS, Iowa** – The Iowa Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Advisory Council has awarded 10 new STEM BEST® ([Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers](#)) Partners across Iowa.

STEM BEST Partners transform typical K-12 classroom environments and methods to unite the workplace with the classroom and develop clear pathways from STEM education to STEM careers in the state. Since 2014, the STEM Council has established eight STEM BEST Partners that currently serve as examples of these school-business partnerships.

"Iowa companies must be able to hire enough skilled workers so they can grow and innovate, and more Iowans deserve to have the skills needed for rewarding careers," said Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, co-chair of the STEM Council. "Through STEM BEST, educators and business leaders work together with students to strengthen Iowa's talent pipeline and close the skills gap. STEM BEST is one of many programs that promise to help reach our Future Ready Iowa goal of 70 percent of Iowa's workforce having education or training beyond high school by 2025."

The STEM Council's executive committee voted unanimously on Monday to award and support 10 of 14 proposed partnerships that bring to the table a total cost-share commitment of \$566,234 and more than 60 business and community partners. Nearly \$250,000 in STEM Council investment is made possible through a combination of state and private funds and is divided equally among these 10 awardees to purchase equipment and provide teacher training:

- Assumption High School, Davenport — Southeast STEM Region
- Boone High School — North Central STEM Region
- Fort Madison Community High School — Southeast STEM Region
- IKM-Manning Community School District — Southwest STEM Region
- Muscatine Community School District — Southeast STEM Region
- North Cedar Elementary School, Cedar Falls — Northeast STEM Region
- Spencer High School — Northwest STEM Region
- Story County Consortium (Ames, Ballard, Collins-Maxwell, Colo-NESCO, Gilbert, Nevada, and Roland-Story School Districts) — North Central STEM Region
- Waukee APEX — South Central STEM Region
- West Delaware County Community School District — Northeast STEM Region

"STEM BEST fosters an environment where communities match the needs of the local workforce to the skills students learn and gain in the classroom," said Kemin Industries President and CEO Dr. Chris Nelson, co-chair of the STEM Council. "Creating these school-business partnerships is a key priority of the STEM Council with the belief that they will meet the STEM career demand in their communities and shape the future of Iowa's economy."

Each selected program submitted an in-depth proposal, considering factors like education driven by industry need, rigorous, relevant and dynamic STEM curriculum and authentic partnerships. These models bring various strengths in community partnerships, district demographics and program focus and will serve as models for others around the state.

To learn more about the model and the current eight STEM BEST partners, visit [www.IowaSTEM.gov/STEMBEST](http://www.IowaSTEM.gov/STEMBEST).

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