June, 2021

North Central STEM Region

Monthly News

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Congratulations to the 2021-2022 STEM Scale-Up Recipients

Congratulations to North Central Iowa organizations that were awarded one of 12 STEM Scale-Up programs. Over 13,000 PreK-12 students will be impacted in the region by these programs in 2021-2022 and over 245 educators will attend program professional development!

The STEM Scale-Up Program offers curriculum covering topics such as robotics, physical computing, digital math, engineering design, biotechnology, career exploration and more. The menu of programs was created through the review of over 300 applications from programs that serve students from preschool to high school. The North Central STEM program awardees were selected by the NC STEM Regional Advisory Board. Selection criteria was based on need, student diversity, geographic location and distribution, and plans to sustain the program, among other factors. The list of awarded organizations and programs can be found **HERE**.

Beginning in July, awarded educators will begin attending professional development with a majority of the sessions occurring in person. Thank you to all the program providers for their efforts to implement high-quality training for Iowa Educators! If you have questions around your award and your upcoming professional development, please reach out to the STEM Hub: ncstem@iastate.edu.

Pushing the Boundaries of Math

Abigail Burnet wants people to know that Math can be beautiful. To Burnet, who recently completed a post-baccalaureate program at Iowa State University, there is more to math than people realize.

“There is so much math out there to explore which has nothing to do with times tables or rationalizing denominators,” Burnet said, recognizing the negative emotions people may have about the subject.

She recently explored combining math and art as she completed a series of 13 mathematical sculptures. The project, titled "**Knot Diagrams in 3 Dimensions**, uses concepts from knot theory and art history to tell stories from Burnet’s experience as a human and mathematician. Knot theory is from a branch of math called topology.

Burnet studied math at Washington College in Maryland, and was greatly influenced by her teachers and peers who were excited about the subject.

“My undergraduate thesis advisor, Dr. Poulsen, was incredibly kind, patient, and encouraging at every step of my path,” Burnet said. “He taught me that making mistakes and asking for help are not only ok, but in fact are the best parts of learning something new.”

Sharing her passion for math is important for Burnet and she enjoys the opportunity to teach young learners that Math can be exciting. Burnet contributed an educational video to the Virtual Family Math Mashup summer series, helping nearly 300 families start exploring the math field of topology.

“The videos are full of cool math and fun that everyone can enjoy, even if you don't normally like math!” Burnett said.

Burnet’s next step is to pursue a master's degree from New Mexico State University Department of Mathematical Sciences.

“My goal is to learn as much math as I can, and to continue finding ways to make math more accessible, inclusive, and fun,” Burnet said.

Burnet encourages young learners to ask questions, be curious, and not be afraid to be wrong. “Look for the resources available to you through your school and then use them; there is no shame in finding a tutor, dropping in during office hours, or forming a study group,” Burnett said.

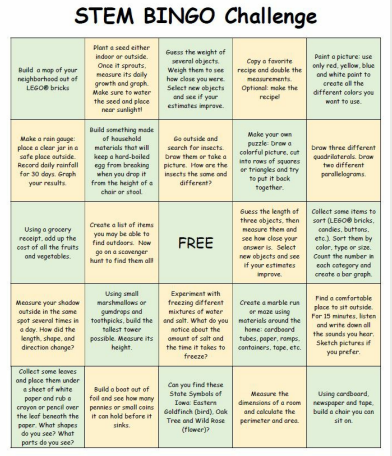
Summertime STEM Resources

Encourage children to explore the world around them with the North Central **STEM Bingo Challenge Board**.

The **STEM Council's Teachable Moment** website has a collection of STEM lessons and activities for

students, parents and educators to use at home.

The **Virtual Family Math Mashup** has kicked off! Explore Math this summer with fun activities created by ISU Math students.



Thank You for Your Service

With the end of the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the North Central STEM Region wants to thank Advisory Board Members who are stepping down:

Jerry Chizek
Kristle Curtis
Camille Sloan Schroeder
Nancy Woods
Michael Young

Are You a School Board Member?

Are you interested in providing STEM opportunities to Iowa's young people? Consider applying for a position on the North Central STEM Advisory Board.

Apply Today!

Calendar of Events

August 17
NC STEM Region Advisory Board Meeting 12-1:30 PM

August 22
STEM Day at the Iowa State Fair

September 26
Transforming Education for the Workforce Summit

Contact Us

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2020-2021 NC STEM Advisory Board

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Michael Pedersen, Marshalltown
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