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Governor Lujan Grisham Announces 1st Annual Governor's STEM Challenge

Albuquerque – Governor Lujan Grisham announced on Friday the first-ever New Mexico Science Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Challenge program. High schools that elect to participate will use a question formulated by Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL) as a problem solving tool in science classes and will receive funding for teacher stipends, professional development, and supplies. Schools will pick ten students to work as a STEM team to answer the question based on criteria provided by LANL. These students will all receive an NMAA Varsity letter, the same award student athletes receive when they participate on a Varsity sports team.

Participating New Mexico STEM employers will judge answers based on the quality of the work and the degree to which the answer uses skills required by New Mexico STEM businesses. The employers will provide an award of \$5,000 to the winning team (\$500 per student).

“I hope that students in New Mexico take this as a message that you are wanted in this state, that you can solve problems, and your state government supports your work,” Gov. Lujan Grisham said. “There is unlimited academic and scientific potential for New Mexico students.”

“This program combines support from teachers and businesses to show our students that learning STEM skills has real meaning and worth,” said Bill McCamley, Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. “STEM jobs pay really well – the average salary of an engineer in New Mexico is \$65,000. We want our students to know if they work hard and study these subjects that can get a great job right here.”

Participating New Mexico companies include Chevron Mining, Virgin Galactic, Deloitte, Meow Wolf, Freeport McMoran, Intel, Pattern Energy, Facebook, Presbyterian, Descartes Labs, N3B, El Paso Electric, PNM, Boeing, Air Force Research Labs, and Sandia National Laboratories.

“I was really scared when I started my first computer coding program,” said Annalicia Sena, a high school student at School of Dreams Academy. “But I will now have the skills to work on things like stopping cancer and simulating models on how to stop forest fires. I am also being taught to present my work and show what I can do.”



NMDWS Secretary McCamley flanked by Santa Fe High School computer science teacher Brian Smith, School of Dreams student Annalicia Sena, and Victor Reyes from the Office of the Governor.

A full video of the press conference can be seen here:

https://twitter.com/BillMcCamley/status/1149726774722326528?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet