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Investing in the future: \$2 million Lilly Endowment grant to CICP Foundation will support Indiana Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (I-STEM) Resource Network
I-STEM's services provide rigorous and quality professional development programs -- more than 6,000 teachers and counting

INDIANAPOLIS, October 15, 2009— The Indiana Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (I-STEM) Resource Network announced today that a \$2 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership Foundation will support the I-STEM Resource Network. The initiative was established in 2007 and partially funded by a \$3.4 million grant from the Endowment.

The Network is a statewide consortium of 18 Indiana higher education institutions dedicated to measurably improving K-12 student achievement in the STEM disciplines. Over the last two years, the Network has focused on providing research-based professional development for current Indiana math teachers to help meet statewide academic standards. More than 6,000 teachers, who work with more than 150,000 K-12 students throughout Indiana, have participated in I-STEM professional development programs.

“Lilly Endowment is pleased to support the I-STEM Network, which impressively marshals the intellectual resources of Indiana colleges and universities,” said Sara B. Cobb, the Endowment’s vice president for education. “This unprecedented collaboration should significantly help K-12 teachers enhance the impact of their teaching in these STEM disciplines so critical to our state’s future,” added Cobb.

While programs are being developed across all STEM disciplines, the I-STEM Resource Network has focused on statewide programs in mathematics, including coursework for middle level mathematics teachers and the development of the Indiana Algebra Readiness Initiative, a series of conferences and workshops led by nationally-recognized experts, to help teachers prepare students for success in algebra. Algebra is a “gateway” course and a focus for the teacher training because it is a critical building block for the more advanced mathematics courses. Math educators agree that learning algebra is absolutely critical if a student has any aspirations for a career in the life sciences.

“More than ever, algebra teachers need a variety of resources to help *all* students in Indiana improve their algebra skills. The Network provides those resources,” said Bill Reed, past president of the Indiana Council of Teachers of Mathematics and algebra and calculus teacher at Hamilton Southeastern High School in Fishers. “It is imperative for teachers to continue to improve their knowledge and methodologies for teaching algebra.”

“By providing Indiana’s current teachers with easy access to rigorous and quality professional development opportunities in the STEM disciplines, I-STEM has provided the foundation for strategic, systemic change in STEM education in Indiana,” said Anne Shane, vice president of BioCrossroads and one of the founders of the Network. Improving achievement in science and

math will maximize students' opportunities to succeed in the future life sciences workforce. To nurture and help build this life science sector is one of BioCrossroads' key initiatives.

"Research shows that the most important factor in accelerating student achievement is teacher quality. The I-STEM Network provides access to professional development that allows teachers to brush up on their subject matter expertise in math and science that they need to be more effective in the classroom," said Tony Bennett, Ph. D., Indiana superintendent of public instruction. "The programs are also a powerful tool to develop our future workforce and to encourage students to enroll in the STEM disciplines in postsecondary education." The Indiana Department of Education has been instrumental in the development of I-STEM.

Besides providing professional development tied to Indiana's academic standards, STEM Resource Centers at each partnering institution in the Network have been providing grassroots education opportunities for teachers in their regions and throughout the state. The Math Matters program in Southeastern Indiana is a joint project that Indiana University-Bloomington's School of Education and a team from the Lilly Endowment-funded initiative in the region, Economic Opportunities 2015 (EcO15), have instituted to bring project-based learning into math instruction.

K-6 Teacher Science Institutes have been held at St. Mary's College and Integrated Math-Science Workshops (MS2) for teachers in grades 5-9 were organized at Notre Dame.

PRISM and the Homework Hotline at the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, both also funded by Lilly Endowment, continue to provide support to teachers and students looking for information on how to teach and learn STEM subjects.

"Teachers just don't have the time to search online for quality resources to aid in classroom instruction. PRISM has done the research for us," said Diedre Adams, a science and math teacher at West Vigo Middle School in Terre Haute who was a 2008 Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow at NASA. "The lessons and information it provides are invaluable in helping STEM teachers supplement classroom materials, locate the latest research, and find new and fun ways to motivate students in science and math."

The Network is also involved in building a strategic plan for science education reform with the Indiana Department of Education. The development of new professional development programs to be offered through the I-STEM Network for science teachers is in progress.

"In its short history, the I-STEM Network has made significant progress in providing Indiana's STEM teachers with new professional training opportunities, and this additional funding will build upon that foundation," said Bill Walker, executive director of the Network. "Instructors bring new ideas and energy into these professional development classes. This is good for the teachers and their students."

Purdue University provides day-to-day management for the I-STEM Resource Network. The participating institutions are: Ball State University, Indiana University Bloomington, Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, IU Southeast, Marian University, Northwest Indiana Consortium for Teacher Education (Valparaiso University, Purdue Calumet, IU Northwest, Purdue North Central and Calumet College at St. Joseph), Purdue West Lafayette, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, University of Indianapolis, NISMEC (University of Notre Dame, St. Mary's College and IU South Bend) and the University of Southern Indiana.

About the I-STEM Resource Network

The I-STEM Resource Network is an unprecedented partnership of public and private higher education institutions, K-12 schools, business, and government. I-STEM includes committees comprised of educational content experts and practitioners who come together to design and employ programs to address STEM issues. I-STEM works to support K–12 teachers and leaders working to implement high academic standards towards STEM literacy for all students. It also provides Indiana education leaders with new knowledge about teaching and learning. The I-STEM vision is for Indiana to be a national leader in student academic achievement in STEM disciplines and improve the quality of the workforce.