



South Central Washington STEM

Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics



IMPACT REPORT

2023

A LETTER FROM THE CO-DIRECTORS

Greetings,

2023 was an exciting year of onboarding new staff, improving and bringing to scale existing programs and events, as well as rolling out innovative new opportunities! New partnerships were developed, grants received, and opportunities to share the work of the South Central Washington STEM Network and its regional partners were abundant. We are excited to share some of the highlights of 2023 with you.

Since 2018 when, the Network has been hard at work supporting school districts in the use of data to measure and inform their improvement efforts, and to strengthen their own capacity related to data usage. We invite you to read about the P20W and H2P data projects in this year's impact report.

On May 12th, the STEM Network had the opportunity to host Mr. Alan Golston, president of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation United States Program. Mr Golston led a roundtable discussion with six students from the ESD 105 region who are enrolled in dual-credit/college in the high school programs. The discussion was later written up as an article titled, ["What Seven High School Students Taught Me about the Need for Education Pathways Programs - A Lesson School and Business Leaders Should Prioritize."](#)

On October 3rd, the 8th annual Pathway to the Career and College Fair transitioned from being a multiple-day event hosted at local high schools to a one-day event at the Sun Dome. This year, 83 career and college reps met with 4,500+ students from 21 regional high schools!

On October 11th and 12th, the STEM Network hosted a film crew from Synergy Enterprises. The Virtual STEM Role Model Project was selected as one of two projects funded by the United States Department of Education to be featured on the What Works Clearinghouse website. In March 2024, the new Best Practices Clearinghouse Focus on the Field section will take viewers to South Central Washington to learn about our virtual mentoring project.

With generous support from the Biller Family Foundation, the STEM Network was able to pilot a new innovative program for students age 16-29 to explore career pathways in Healthcare, construction, and advanced manufacturing. This free, 8-10-week program provided participants with industry-recognized certifications, technical and professional skills, and professional mentoring. The Network received a Career Connect Washington, Round 11 Program Builder grant to continue and scale this exciting career preparation program.

In December, the Network, in partnership with the Selah and Granger School districts, Yakima Valley College, and the College Success Foundation, was awarded a four-year, Gates Foundation, Limitless Learning Network grant. The Limitless Learning Network brings together practitioners across Washington state who are leading the implementation of programs that support students' transitions from high school to postsecondary education. The 25 partnerships in Limitless will have an opportunity to connect with teams of local K12 and higher education partners with peers across Washington State, creating opportunities to share information, explore new ideas, and develop best practices together.

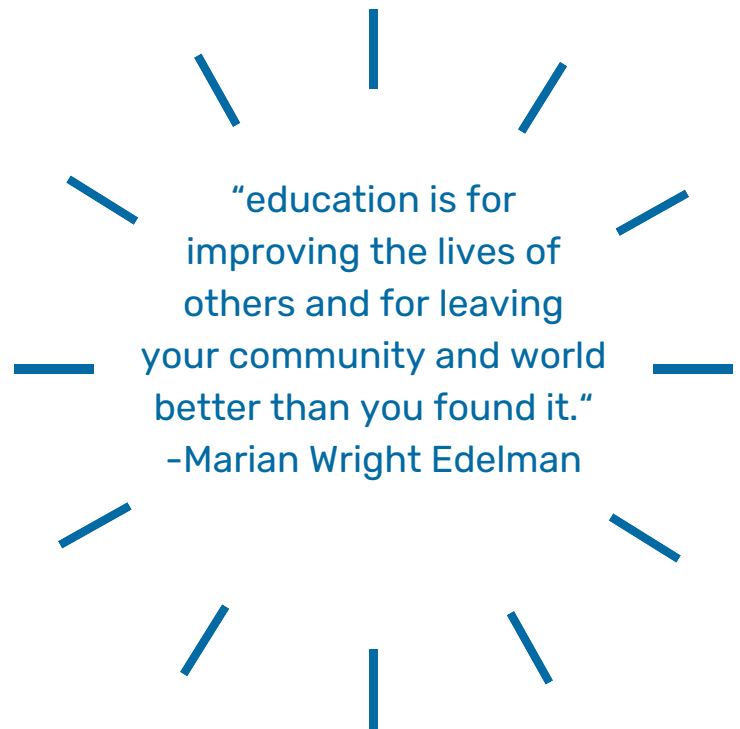
We invite you to sit back and celebrate with us as you read about the accomplishments of 2023.

Best regards,
Mark Cheney and Hugo Moreno
Co-Directors, South Central Washington STEM Network



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MISSION:

The South Central Washington STEM Network is a region-wide network of cross-sector stakeholders that collaborates to ensure that ALL of the region's youth have access to a high quality STEM education and career connected learning opportunities, resulting in an interest-driven career path that leads to a family-wage job and economic vitality for the region

CENTERED AROUND

equity

Thank you to West Sound STEM for the collaboration on our equity statement!



The South Central Washington STEM Network believes that ALL students deserve a high-quality STEM education and access to a career pathway of their choosing that leads to a high-demand, family-wage job.

The Network is committed to ensuring that students are supported with the relationships, connections, and resources they need to thrive.

The current reality is that not all students have the same opportunities. Access to basic needs (housing, food, and transportation), technology, professional connections, paid work experience, and credential programs with labor-market value are all examples of the barriers our students face and ones that we must work to systematically address.

The STEM Network and its regional partners have the following shared commitments to ensure our shared work is serving students from priority populations:

- Use of disaggregated data to identify and focus resources for the people and places in greatest need to maximize impact.
- Regular reflection and analysis of the barriers that limit access to opportunities and a commitment to address and remove those barriers.
- Respect for and integration of the wisdom, voice, experience, and leadership of community perspectives.
- Develop shared ownership, co-creating the programmatic, systemic, and policy solutions needed to address systemic inequities in our region.
- Commitment to finding solutions that will have an impact at a region-wide scale.
- Prioritize cultural proficiency and intentionally reach out to our whole community.
- Conduct ongoing self-examination to ensure that the membership and leadership in our network are also demographically representing our region.

MEASURING OUR

impact



STEP Into STEM

8 Elementary Schools Attended
450 Students Participated
10 CWU STEM Students Volunteered

STEM Building

11 Day Sponsor Organizations
450 Volunteers
229,000 Fair Attendees
14 FREE STEM Activities/Booths

STEM Rising STAR

100 Students Nominated
10 Districts Represented

FAFSA Student Support

20 School Districts Supported
95 Financial Aid Workshops
900 Students Served

STEM Like Me

100 Participating Students
10 STEM Professionals
8 Companies Represented

Pathway to The Top

1 Regional Location
21 Participating High Schools
4500 Students Attended
83 College and Career Reps

Career Academy

3 Programs
50 Students Enrolled

STEM Virtual Role Model

379 students participated
69 sessions completed
18 Near Peers hired

MEET THE

team



Mark Cheney
Co-Director



Hugo Moreno
Co-Director



Maddy Rogers
Administrative Assistant



Shelly O'Neill
Career Connected Learning



Jean Brown
Career Navigator



Alma Castillo
Career Readiness



Hanah Singco
STEM Specialist



Ariel Medina
STEM Specialist



Oscar Godinez
Migrant-Career Readiness



CAREER AND *technical education*

During the 2022-23 school year, ESD 105 CTE Directors and Teachers actively participated in the Yakima Valley General Advisory Council (G.A.C.). This collaborative effort brings together representatives from various sectors from industry, education, workforce, labor and government to enhance Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and programs across our region.

Meetings occur three times annually, fostering partnerships, collaboration and ensuring CTE curriculum remains aligned with industry needs. The G.A.C. also facilitates resource sharing, technical assistance, and industry tours covering topic areas such as CLNA data, Perkins V grant assistance, OSPI Strategic Plan approval, CTE Teacher certification, Dual Credit articulation, and CTE Course approvals. The STEM Network provided technical assistance to all 25 school districts in the ESD 105 region, with plans for increased support this year.



CAREER

academy

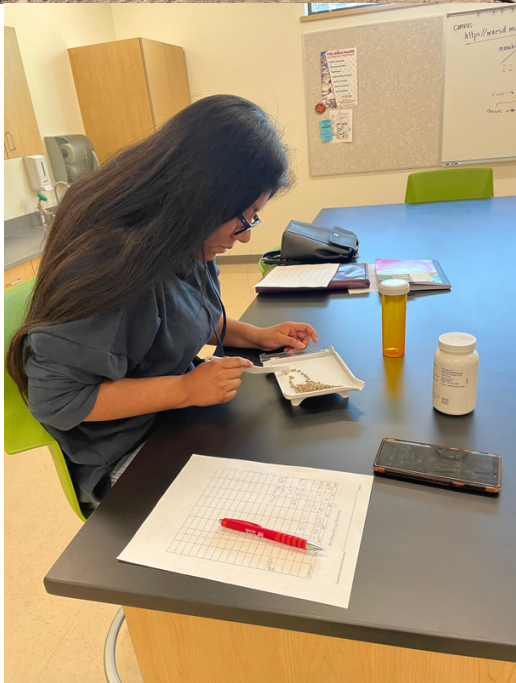


In 2023, the Career Academy embarked on its inaugural year, aligning seamlessly with the Career Connected Learning Continuum as a pioneering Career Prep program. The Career Academy offered three industry sector programs that introduced and prepared participants for occupations in Healthcare (Pharmacy Assistant), Construction, and Advanced Manufacturing industries.

The program incorporated classroom learning with hands-on training that aligned with specific industry standards. Participants earned industry recognized certifications and licenses and developed technical skills that enhanced their employability and versatility in the job market.

The Academy went beyond technical proficiency by weaving in professional skill development, ensuring that participants emerged not just job-ready but equipped with a versatile practical skill set that poised them for on the job success in their chosen occupation. Whether launching participants directly into the workforce or inspiring continued education, the Career Academy proved an impactful approach to career preparation.

The 2024 Career Academy plans to offer a variety of new opportunities in exciting in demand industries like Healthcare, Public Safety, Construction, Culinary, and Engineering.



LIVE HERE

work here

Live Here, Work Here is an engaging opportunity for industry professionals in the Yakima Valley to showcase their company and career and job opportunities with middle school/high school students. These students are just developing their understanding of who they can be in the future and so it is vital to introduce them to local companies. This project is currently using students from the Entertainment Media Production class at YV Technical Skills Center to photograph, film, and edit this work. Each video showcases the broad scope of the industry or business complete with 5 employee interviews from different sectors of the business from a student perspective.



STEM

Rising Star

The Washington STEM Rising Star award is a state-wide effort to encourage girls in grades 9-11 to reach for the stars and embrace STEM education, career exploration, and personal development in and outside the classroom. 71 young female students from the ESD 105 region were nominated for the WA STEM Rising Star Award. On April 26th, the South Central STEM Network team hosted a celebration honoring 22 of our nominees.

The ceremony included a recognition slideshow, and speakers including video messages from Senator Patty Murray, and Representative Gina Mosbrucker. Jen Cruz was our keynote speaker. She graduated from Wapato High School and the University of Minnesota and is now a Ph.D. candidate at Harvard. Expanding this event further this year, we invited female STEM Professionals to sit at our tables to provide an opportunity for our students to hear their stories and develop a network of leaders in our region.

The first-place winner receiving \$500 was Bailey Lowry from the West Valley School District, the second-place winner receiving \$250 was Marisol Santiago from Easton School District, and the third-place winner Taylor Aadland from the Selah School District received \$100.



STEM

like me



Another exciting STEM opportunity to make its return to South Central Washington in 2023 was “STEM Like Me!” This year, the South Central STEM Network, in partnership with **Central Washington University (CWU)**, welcomed 100 middle school students from Toppenish Middle School for this career exploration event. STEM Like Me is an engaging interaction between professionals and middle school students developing an understanding of who they may want to be in the future. Over the course of the full-day event, students participated in fun and engaging hands-on activities led by STEM professionals representing local and regional companies/organizations that provided students with a glimpse of what their job entails. Students were also provided with a campus tour and scavenger hunt to explore and get to know the CWU campus, attended a panel discussion with current CWU students pursuing a STEM Career Pathway and capped the day with a barbeque lunch. Building on this successful event, the South Central STEM Network plans to host an additional STEM Like Me event in May of 2024.



If you would like to participate in this year’s STEM Like Me event, please feel free to contact the South Central STEM Network.

STEP *into stem*

Step into STEM is an amazing opportunity for fourth-grade students in our region! We have partnered with **Central Washington University** to explore the fascinating world of STEM. This half-day program features a career fair where students participate in hands-on activities with college students from STEM fields, and it all wraps up with an inspiring campus tour. For most students, it's their first time on a college campus and learning about STEM. Our mission is to spark enthusiasm for STEM careers and create lasting memories in the process!



CLIMBING HIGHER

Series

The Climbing Higher: Expedition CWU Series, a collaborative partnership between the South Central STEM Network and Central Washington University (CWU), continues to make substantial strides in guiding students in our region towards a postsecondary pathway at CWU. On December 6th, 2023, we hosted a successful event at YV-Tech, where over 60 students and parents/guardians completed essential tasks, such as financial aid, scholarship, and admissions applications. This ongoing partnership, bolstered by the commitment of the STEM team, UW Gear Up, the College Success Foundation, CWU staff, and students, not only addresses immediate challenges but also plays a pivotal role in tackling summer melt. Through targeted programming and outreach, including upcoming Spring events, we are providing students with the resources and support needed to achieve their educational goals, ensuring a brighter future for our region's aspiring scholars.



FINANCIAL

aid

In pursuit of the Washington state goal of achieving a 60% financial aid completion rate, the South Central Washington STEM Network has been actively working to advance financial aid application completion. With a focus on empowering students and families to access postsecondary pathways, the STEM Team has played a vital role by attending and hosting over 75 financial aid completion events in ESD 105, assisting approximately 900 students and families in successfully completing their financial aid applications. To further this mission, a strategic collaboration has been formed with the College Success Foundation (CSF). Our shared goal with CSF is to facilitate the completion of financial aid applications by providing expertise from staff with extensive experience in financial aid, ensuring that students and families receive the support they need to achieve their educational aspirations.



NEED SUPPORT?

CONTACT ALMA OR OSCAR:
ALMA: ALMA.CASTILLO@ESD105.ORG
OSCAR: OSCAR.GODINEZ@ESD105.ORG



PATHWAY TO THE *top*

The Pathway to the Top Career and College Expo was established to address the gap in access to high-quality fairs within our region. Hosted at the State Fair Park SunDome on October 3, 2023, this one-day regional event is designed to empower students, parents, and educators by providing a comprehensive platform for exploring opportunities and gathering resources to make informed decisions about post-secondary aspirations. This year 4,500 students from 21 high schools participated. 83 Representatives from colleges, universities, labor and unions, apprenticeship programs, technical schools, and local and state-wide industries across Washington industries attended. We were honored to host a Military rock band from Camp Murray who entertained our students. Army black hawk helicopters, National Guard tanks, and emergency services came prepared with static displays. Our representatives traveled from across Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, and Arizona.





2023
Commissioners
Award

THANK YOU TO OUR DAY SPONSORS!
Toppenish High School
Yakima Valley Technical Skills Center
Yakima Rotary
Central Washington University
Wapato School District
Pacific Northwest University
West Valley School District
Heritage University
Davis High School
Yakima Valley College
Sunnyside High School

STEM

building

The South Central Washington STEM Network partners with Yakima Valley businesses, school districts, community organizations, and local volunteers to host the STEM Building at the Central Washington State Fair. The STEM Building aims to generate awareness of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and the numerous STEM career pathways available to the youth of South Central Washington. Each year the STEM Building consists of 12-14 booths that feature FREE hands-on activities for students and family members of all ages. Whether using a VR Headset, designing your own path on our tinker wall, creating a straw rocket, or tackling Lego art; fairgoers learn about what STEM is and how it relates to today's numerous career options. The success of the STEM Building is dependent on the 10-Day Sponsor organizations that provide the 450+ volunteers that work in the hands-on activity booths that the fairgoers participate in. This year we hosted two Education Days of nearly 2000 students throughout our valley! They rotated through our building getting to participate in the activities we offered and each one left with a free book provided by the ESD 105!



**SHOUT OUT TO OUR
FINANCIAL SPONSORS!**
Central Pre-Mix
Fresh Hop Group

**We have earned the 2023 Commissioners
Award for another year!**

PARTNERSHIPS

-a special thank you to our 2023 partners-

Our partners are critical to the success of our mission. By supporting us through collaborative efforts, it increases our impact on our community, school staff, students, and their families to deliver opportunities for all.

- AJAC
- **American Rock Products***
- ANEW
- Association General Contractors
- Bickleton School District
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Biller Family Foundation
- Bricks 4 Kidz
- Career Connect Washington
- **Central Pre Mix***
- **Central Washington University***
- Central Washington Homebuilders Assoc.
- Cle Elum-Roslyn School District
- College Success Foundation
- Columbia Basin College
- Columbia Strategic Consulting Group
- Computing for All
- Damman School District
- United States Department of Education
- East Valley School District
- Eastern Washington University
- Easton School District
- Educational Service District 105
- Ellensburg School District
- ESD 105 Migrant Department
- ESD 105 Open Doors
- Field Group Marketing and Advertisement
- First Nations Mesa
- Goldendale School District
- Grandview School District
- Granger School District
- Heritage University
- Highland School District
- HLA Engineering and Land Surveying
- Kittitas School District
- Kwik Lok Corporation
- La Casa Hogar
- Mabton School District
- Mt. Adams (White Swan)
- Naches Valley School District
- National College Attainment Network
- OIC of Washington
- OSPI
- Parsec Computers
- Patriot Company
- People for People
- Pepsi
- Perry Technical Institute
- Pexco Aerospace
- PNWU
- RGI Corporation
- Royal City School District
- Selah School District
- SHRM
- South Central Workforce
- State Fair Park and Event Center
- Suncomm 911
- Sunnyside School District
- The Museum of Flight
- Thorp School District
- Toppenish School District
- Tree Top
- Yakama Tribal School
- Union Gap School District
- UW Gear Up
- Van Doren Sales
- Wahluke School District
- Wapato School District
- Washington Apple Education Foundation
- Washington College Access Network
- Washington Department of Ecology
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Opportunity Scholarship
- Washington State Tree Fruit Association
- WSU Data Analytics Department
- Washington State University Tri-Cities
- Washington STEM
- Washington Student Achievement Council
- Wenas Mammoth Foundation
- West Valley School District
- **WSECU***
- Yakima School District
- Yakima County Development Association
- Yakima Federal Savings and Loans
- Yakima Valley College
- Yakima Valley CTE General Advisory Committee
- Yakima Valley Partners for Education
- Yakima Valley Partners Habitat for Humanity
- Yakima Valley Vocational Technical Skills Center
- Zillah School District



U.S. Department of Education



check out our website & lets connect!

www.scwstem.com



follow us!



READY TO LEARN MORE?

email us at: maddy.rogers@esd105.org

thank you for another great year!

SOUTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON STEM NETWORK

