

## WRPS donates \$127,000 to support STEM education

November 19, 2015



**WRPS President Mark Lindholm, Lee Lambert, network director, Washington STEM, Mid-Columbia STEM Network Executive Director Deb Bowen, and AECOM senior executives James Taylor and Terri Marts participated in a ceremony to announce WRPS' donation at Highlands Middle School in Kennewick.**

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – Tri-City area students, from grade school through college, will benefit from \$127,000 in contributions announced today by Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS), the Hanford tank operations contractor.

The money will be used to strengthen and expand K-12, college and community science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)-related programs.

The Mid-Columbia STEM Education Network (MCSEN) will receive \$50,000:

- *\$30,000 to support events that celebrate our region as a national leader in STEM literacy and to recruit volunteers to conduct STEM programs that link students with mentors and role models. These programs include: “STEM Like Me!” a program that encourages students to consider STEM careers. Through personal interactions with STEM professionals, middle school students are inspired to envision themselves in the shoes of a STEM professional.*
- *\$20,000 for STEM-related education activities at the REACH and the local Boys & Girls Club. Through the MCSEN, these funds will provide additional staff and equipment to support currently underrepresented populations including minorities and women.*

WSU Tri-Cities will receive \$50,000 in STEM scholarships and STEM faculty support.

Columbia Basin College will receive \$27,000 to complete the purchase of new equipment for its Nuclear Technology Program and provide STEM-related scholarships.

“WRPS recognizes the need for more students to become interested in STEM careers. There’s an increasing demand for workers in science and technology fields, in the Tri-Cities, in Washington and our country. If we’re to compete globally, we need more STEM-educated students,” said James Taylor, an AECOM senior executive who made the announcement on behalf of WRPS. AECOM is the majority owner of WRPS with Energy Solutions and AREVA being the other team members.

“WRPS is excited about helping the Mid-Columbia STEM network extend its impact in this region, especially in serving underrepresented students. It’s a great addition to WRPS’ ongoing support of STEM-related activities at WSU Tri-Cities and Columbia Basin College,” Taylor said.

“We are grateful for WRPS’ generous gift and their vision in helping to position the Mid-Columbia as a national leader in STEM literacy. The Tri-Cities was named one of the top regions in the nation for STEM jobs but, unfortunately, too few of our students see STEM’s power or possibilities. WRPS is having a real impact by providing not only these much-needed funds, but also through the exceptional WRPS employees who generously donate their time to help young people experience STEM in action,” reports Deb Bowen, Executive Director of the Washington State STEM Education Foundation and the Mid-Columbia STEM Network.

## **WRPS**

WRPS, owned by AECOM and EnergySolutions, with integrated subcontractor AREVA, is a prime contractor to the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of River Protection and is responsible for managing and reducing the risk posed by the waste stored in Hanford’s underground tanks.

Washington State STEM Education Foundation and Mid-Columbia STEM Network

The Washington State STEM Education Foundation incorporated in 2009 with a vision of becoming a national model for generating passionate support for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math in Public Education: Every Student, Every Day. The non-profit's first project was to support the launch of Delta High School, and now has expanded the scope of work to enhance projects that create a substantial and sustainable impact on the quality of STEM education across the Mid-Columbia.

The Mid-Columbia STEM Network was launched in 2014. The Network is one of a number of STEM Networks being developed across our state under the leadership of Washington STEM. STEM networks comprise education, business and community leaders who are committed to sharing promising practices and strengthening the STEM pipeline. For more information, including links to outstanding volunteer opportunities in our region visit: [WashingtonSTEMeducation.org](http://WashingtonSTEMeducation.org).

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