Career Connected Learning

Participating Hubs

Central Oregon STEM Hub
Columbia Gorge STEM Hub
Frontier STEM Hub
Greater Oregon STEM Hub
Lane STEM Hub
Mid-Valley STEM-CTE Hub
Northwest STEM Hub
Oregon Coast STEM Hub
Portland Metro STEM Partnership
South Metro Salem STEM Hub
Southern Oregon STEM Hub
Umpqua Valley STEAM Hub

Grant Overview

The purpose of this funding was to expand and deepen the Career Connected Learning experiences to students of color, students navigating poverty, and students from rural areas through industry connections, industry employment opportunities and educator support. Career connected learning offers career options to students of all ages, helps them discover their interests and passions, and empowers them to make purposeful choices that relate directly to their chosen career pathway. It also enables students to build academic, technical, and professional skills, experience the relevance of their classroom learning, attain postsecondary degrees and credentials, and enter specific careers, fields or sectors. To synthesize the grant objectives, we wanted to ensure that youth and educators who have been historically underserved and underrepresented in STEM opportunities in our communities have access to quality STEM experiences, specifically those connected to high-wage, high-demand careers in STEM fields. We aimed to create these opportunities for young people and identify educators who could participate in externships to change the trajectory of who is accessing STEM learning.

Addressing Equity

Rural Oregon school districts and marginalized youth struggle with limited access to STEM subject areas and exposure to a variety of careers. The project focused on establishing a foundation for collectivizing Career Connected Learning work across the STEM Hub Network. Establishing common measures across the Hubs created the potential for clear data on the populations being served through this work, providing opportunities for data analysis and program shifts to ensure equity goals were addressed. Specific strategies were implemented throughout the biennium that included: compensating educators for externship experiences; developing regional partnerships with organizations/individuals that serve populations underrepresented in STEM careers; and engaging with industry partners/leaders to develop and deliver workplace preparatory experiences. Tc

the Network

Grant Achievements

We created a shared google folder system to contain all our communications, decision making tools, tracking documents, and general information. All the participating Hubs have access and ownership. We collected and summarized the internship models by Hub. We established a common framework for externships that could help guide regions who are new to externships. Then, each Hub used the framework and adapted it to their timelines and priority areas. Some Hubs focused on CTE teachers, others on core content, and some on High School counselors and career specialists. Each Hub successfully coordinated externships for one summer.

For internship capacity, we learned that many Hubs do not programmatically coordinate internships but work with partners to do that work. We co-authored a letter to the Workforce Investment Boards to encourage their engagement with Hubs as additional funding became available at the state level. This letter improved traction with some Hubs who had previously not worked directly with their local WIB. We also included Oregon STEM in these meetings as CCL is a priority of Oregon STEM. A notable outcome across the STEM Hub Network involved a collaboration with Orgon STEM to apply for Catalyze Challenge grant funds – these funds provided rural Hubs the ability to support youth internships through August 2025. Further collaboration persisted to secure funds outside of ODE to continue, expand and support our shared work in youth internships!

Additionally, in Spring 2023, Hubs joined Connected Lane County Spark Lab and Oregon STEM to better understand Spark Lab's standard operating procedures for their internship program, touring the facility and exploring best practices. This shared experience with Spark Lab helped inform much of the work that lies ahead for the Catalyze Challenge grant recipients.