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Lt. Gov. McLean, First Lady Lisa Bullock Launch Montana STEM Mentors Initiative to Encourage Girls to Enter STEM Fields

HELENA – Today, Lt. Governor Angela McLean and First Lady Lisa Bullock kicked-off the Montana STEM Mentors initiative to encourage more girls to enter Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields. Through this initiative, McLean and Bullock aim to recruit 100 professional mentors to work with schools and students in their community to help them gain valuable skills and experience in STEM fields.

"Montana is home to thousands scientists, engineers, and computer programmers. Through the Montana STEM Mentors initiative, we'll build on the knowledge of these men and women to open new doors of opportunity for the next generation," McLean said. "Montanans recognize that we have a responsibility to provide the next generation with greater opportunities than we had growing up here. The Montana STEM Mentors initiative is a great opportunity to give back."

Professionals interested in serving as a mentor for students in their community can commit at Innovatemontana.com/stem. Those who commit to be a mentor are asked to volunteer at least 20 hours through the end of the school year providing information, guidance and insight to girls and young women in Montana interested in pursuing an education and career in the STEM fields.

"I had the benefit of amazing and talented Montanans who mentored me and encouraged me to enter a STEM career. Now I want to ensure that every Montana girl or young woman who is interested in pursuing a STEM career has the same opportunity I had," Bullock said.

The launch of the Montana STEM Mentors initiative took place at Exploration Works in Helena, where McLean was joined by Nikki Anderson of Exploration Works, Sheila Hogan the director of the Department of Administration and co-chair of Governor Bullock's Equal Pay for Equal Work Task Force, as well as Montanans who work in STEM fields who signed up as mentors.

Studies have shown that one contributing factor to the gender-pay gap is the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields. While women account for nearly half of the workforce in the U.S., they

account for less than a quarter of those working in STEM careers. STEM fields have also been shown to have a much smaller gender-wage gap than other occupations.

The Montana Stem Mentors initiative is a part of the national Million Women Mentors campaign to increase the number of mentors available to girls and young women interested in entering the STEM fields. The initiative launch coincides with Computer Science Education Week.

Photos: [1](#), [2](#)

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