



650 W. State Street • Room 307 • Boise, ID • 83702
P.O. Box 83720 • Boise, ID • 83720-0037

For Immediate Release

October 28, 2020

Contact: Mike Keckler
208-332-1591 (office)
208-866-5734 (cell)
Mike.Keckler@osbe.idaho.gov

**HIGHER EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS RECOGNIZED AS
“GEM INNOVATORS”**

Six of Idaho’s public higher education instructors have been recognized for their efforts to inspire, engage and support their students in the classroom.

The six were named the 2020 recipients of the GEM Innovative Educator Award by Idaho’s General Education Matriculation (GEM) committee. All teach general education courses at institutions throughout Idaho.

"General education includes some of the largest, highest demand courses that our college students will take," said Dr. Jonathan Lashley, the State Board of Education’s associate chief academic officer. “We also know that these courses tend to have a fundamental and lasting impact on the success of our students in becoming critical learners, thinkers, and doers. It is important to celebrate the efforts that all of our general education faculty take to promote student success. We are especially proud to highlight and learn from the exceptional work of this year's award winners."

The 2020 GEM Innovative Award winners are:

- Audry Bourne – North Idaho College (Communication)

- Kristin Cook – College of Western Idaho (Math)
- Serena Jenkins Clark – College of Southern Idaho (Music)
- Nancy Johnston – Lewis-Clark State College (Chemistry)
- Barbara Kirchmeier – University of Idaho (English)
- Justin Stover – Idaho State University (History)

In January, the GEM committee asked the eight institutions to nominate a faculty member from each GEM area who:

- Effectively supports student achievement toward General Education learning outcomes
- Crafts courses that are creative, innovative, and otherwise engaging for students
- Facilitates greater inquiry and problem-solving among students outside of their majors
- Explores strategies to increase access and affordability for learners
- Actively mentors and supports other faculty across the state
- Generally sets an example of excellence in general education instruction

Idaho's GEM committee is comprised of faculty and administrators from throughout Idaho's public higher education system. The committee reviews the general education framework from each institution to ensure it aligns with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Essential Learning Outcomes.

The awards were announced during a virtual ceremony as part of committee's General Education Summit held last week.

CapEd Credit Union provided a \$500 honorarium to each of the winners who shared their thoughts and best practices during the ceremony, is available for viewing on the State Board's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/idsboe/videos/407795576880656>

#####