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Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council Releasing New Podcast Episodes

The theme of the third season of STEM Essential is "Vaccination, by STEM"

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa – The Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council is launching the third series of its podcast, STEM Essential. The theme of this series, sponsored by Accumold, is "Vaccination, by STEM," and features Iowans on the front lines behind developing, distributing and administering COVID-19 vaccines.

STEM Essential features leading advocates and voices to discuss the power of STEM education for our students now, and what strong STEM education will mean for the future. Jeff Weld, executive director of the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council, interviews guests about what inspired their path with STEM, how they view the current outlook for STEM and what they expect to see in the years ahead.

"Professionals in health care are today's superheroes, all of whom are using their own STEM educations to protect and heal us through a global pandemic," said Weld. "The only good thing about crisis is the wave of interest in learning about and preventing recurrence, and that is where our STEM Council comes in -- highlighting Iowans to emulate for the next generation of healers."

Weld's first guest on STEM Essential, which debuts today, is Dr. Nafissa Egbuonye, director of public health for the Black Hawk County Health Department. Dr. Egbuonye and Weld discussed the pandemic at the local level and the role that her agency plays in guiding the community.

Dr. Egbuonye said during the podcast, "What excites me about public health is the fact that we are in every sector. This pandemic highlights it, we are working with the schools, superintendents, healthcare leaders, business community—and that's the beauty of public health."

Upcoming guests on this podcast series, scheduled to debut weekly through February and early March, include:

- Patricia Winokur, MD, Executive Dean, University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, Professor of Internal Medicine - Infectious Diseases
- Dr. Balaji Narasimhan, Director, Nanovaccine Institute at Iowa State University
- Ken Sharp Division Director Acute Disease Prevention, Emergency Response and Environmental Health at Iowa Department of Public Health

The STEM ESSENTIAL podcast, including series one and two, can be found at <https://www.iowastem.org/podcast> and is also available on Spotify or Apple Podcasts. For more information on STEM Council programs, events and resources, visit www.iowastem.org.

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About the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council: Established in July 2011 via Governor's Executive Order, the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council is a public-private partnership of educators, companies and Iowa students and families addressing policies and programs designed to improve Iowa's educational system focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM Council works to engage and prepare students for a career-ready workforce path, regain our state's historic leadership position in education and provide a vital competitive economic advantage now, and for the future, to ensure that every Iowa student has access to world-class STEM education opportunities. The 62-member STEM Council is co-chaired by Governor Kim Reynolds. For more information, visit <https://iowastem.org>.