



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Wave of Engineers Sweeps into Oregon Classrooms**  
*Business Education Compact Launches 16<sup>th</sup> Annual National Engineers Month*

BEAVERTON, OR—Engineers and technicians from more than 30 Oregon and SW Washington companies will visit hundreds of K-12 classrooms this month. Their mission—to build awareness and excitement for a world of careers available to students who excel in math and science. Recognizing the effectiveness of the program in supporting Oregon’s economic future, Governor Kulongoski has officially proclaimed February 2010 to be National Engineers Month (NEM).

NEM 2010 marks the 16<sup>th</sup> year that the nonprofit Business Education Compact (BEC) has orchestrated the statewide initiative. Engineer volunteers have visited more than 275,000 students since the program began in 1995. Through age-appropriate presentations and demonstrations, these volunteers bring math and science to life for students, helping them to appreciate how those studies can serve as a gateway to a very exciting future.

Future American competitiveness is highly dependent on producing a workforce with significant math and science skills. Already a deficit of engineers is apparent. For the past two years, Forbes magazine reported engineering positions to be the hardest jobs for employers to fill. And the pipeline is shrinking. The percentage of ACT-tested students who said they were interested in majoring in engineering has dropped steadily from 7.6 percent to 4.9 percent over the past decade.

“When students engage with practicing engineers from various disciplines, they gain a new perspective on math and science,” said Tamra Busch-Johnsen, BEC’s executive director. “Through National Engineers Month, we connect the dots between what they are studying in the classroom and the many interesting and creative jobs that engineers and technicians do in the real world.” She added, “It is gratifying to see so many companies volunteer their resources to help improve education, especially during these tough economic times.”

This year’s partners are doing an incredible job of reaching out to local schools. For example, the Oregon Department of Transportation is sending civil, electrical, geological, mechanical and transportation engineers to schools in 18 counties across the state. IBM engineers designed an origami “leaping frog” activity that illustrates the makeup of a computer processor. And Intel has made National Engineers Month one of their cornerstone volunteer activities for 2010.

BEC’s NEM 2010 partners are: Acumed; BASi; Biotronik, Inc.; Bonneville Power Administration; CH2M Hill; Columbia Sportswear Company; Daimler Trucks North America LLC; Equa-Chlor, Inc.; Electro Scientific Industries, Inc.; ESCO Corporation; FLIR Systems, Inc.; IBM; Intel Corporation; McKinstry; National Energy Technology Laboratory; NIKE, Inc.; Oregon Department of Transportation; Oregon Forest Resources Institute; Oregon Institute of Technology; Oregon Museum of Science & Industry; PacifiCorp; Parsons Corporation; Portland General Electric; Portland Water Bureau; Portland State University; Precision Wire Components; RadiSys Corporation; Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.; The Standard; TriQuint Semiconductor; Vernier Software & Technology; and Welch Allyn.

For more information about National Engineers Month or to participate in this and other upcoming Business Education Compact events, visit [www.becpdx.org](http://www.becpdx.org).

**About the Business Education Compact**

For 26 years, the nonprofit BEC has been making learning real by connecting the classroom and workplace through innovative, hands-on experiences. In addition to stimulating interest in science and math for K-12 students through National Engineers Month, the BEC prepares high school and college students for workplace success through in-depth, paid internships. And to ensure that a high school diploma is a meaningful predictor of post-secondary education and work success, the BEC is leading a statewide initiative to transform K-12 education and dramatically improve student achievement outcomes through proficiency-based education.

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