

STEM U | CEHS

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Earlier this month, 56 teachers from northeast Utah came here to get their hands on science, technology, engineering and math.

Now, after several days at STEM U--a teacher training experience at Utah State University--they are returning to their own school districts, armed with exercises they can use to teach problem-solving skills. The teachers tried the methods out firsthand as students, then were encouraged to think of ways they could teach the same concepts in their classes.

The event included activities, field trips and a free tablet for participants. Its partners included the Center for the School of the Future at USU, Idaho National Lab, USU's Cooperative Extension and the National Energy Foundation.

Dr. Louis Nadelson, who spearheaded the event, has conducted his own research on hands-on learning as well as learning from the research of others into the best practices. "We've seen some wonderful student products, we've seen changes in culture in schools, we've seen transformations of communities ... when teachers go back empowered and assume more of a leadership role."

Tomorrow's employers will need graduates with creativity, collaborative skills, critical thinking and an understanding of their own responsibility and leadership, he said.

Teachers who attended were separated into "strands" that focused on different content areas and age groups. For a look at some of the STEM U activities, scroll through the photos below.



Science teachers explored local watersheds and measured their characteristics, including

salinity, temperature, turbidity, nitrate levels, and macroinvertebrates (bugs, slugs, etc).



Mark Larese-Casanova of USU's Cooperative Extension (left) led his teacher-students through watershed activities at Cutler Marsh, Spring Hollow Campground (shown here) and the Great Salt Lake.



Teachers designed and assembled a protector meant to keep chocolate from melting in the summer sun.



All participants were asked to fashion a tablet stand from file folders and tape.