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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Science Teacher Association recognizes Sanford Underground Research Facility**

*Six SURF team members gave 13 presentations over the three-day conference*

**LEAD, SD**— At the South Dakota STEM Education Conference held last week in Huron, the South Dakota Science Teachers Association honored the Sanford Underground Research Facility with its Platinum Award. The award recognizes organizations that go above and beyond in their support of education, lending time, energy, and support to the conference.

The conference encourages an active interest in and an appreciation for mathematics and science at all levels, while providing professional growth opportunities for math and science educators. This year, six speakers from SURF gave 13 presentations. Additionally, SURF provided financial support to offset the cost of bringing in national education speakers.

“We are honored to have been recognized by the South Dakota Science Teachers Association,” said Mike Headley, executive director of SURF. “Inspiring learning across generations is a core part of our mission. We are proud to support students and educators throughout South Dakota; supporting this conference each year is one way we do that.”

Ashley Armstrong, president of the South Dakota Science Teaching Association, said the organization is “grateful for the support we have received from SURF over the years and look forward to continuing our relationship.” Armstrong is also an education specialist with the SURF Education and Outreach Team.

SURF’s education and outreach specialists develop programming for K-12 students, including curriculum modules, classroom presentations and field trips. Additionally, SURF provides professional development opportunities for educators across the state. In 2021-2022, nearly 20,000 students and more than 700 teachers from South Dakota participated in SURF K-12 programs.

The STEM Ed conference is also supported by Sanford Health of Sioux Falls and Black Hills State University. Additionally, South Dakota EPSCoR is funding an elementary education-focused program that allows K-5 teachers to attend the conference and receive training for free.

“We are so honored to have the support of such prestigious organizations in South Dakota,” Armstrong said. “South Dakota science and math educators benefit greatly, which means K-12 students benefit as well.”

*SURF is operated by the South Dakota Science and Technology Authority (SDSTA) with funding from the Department of Energy’s Office of Science. Our mission is to advance world class science and inspire learning across generations. Visit SURF at [www.SanfordLab.org](http://www.SanfordLab.org).*