



Team INL is one way INL employees give back to their community by donating time and resources to worthy projects such as the annual school supply drive that collects donations for area K-12 students.

Counting the ways Idaho National Laboratory gave back in 2014

From INL Communications & Governmental Affairs

Idaho National Laboratory employees are not only talented in their professions, but also incredibly committed to their communities. And that commitment is evidenced once again by their generous support to the communities where they live and work. From United Way donations to countless volunteer activities, employee contributions in 2014 made the communities better places to be.

During the holiday season, the U.S. Department of Energy's INL contractor Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) supported the annual sitewide Christmas for Families program. This year, employees "adopted" 64 families to provide gifts for 225 children from Arco, Mackay, Howe, Roberts, Pocatello, Rigby, Ririe, Menan, Idaho Falls, Blackfoot and Shelley. BEA donated \$4,000 toward food boxes for each family. Employees at INL and the primary cleanup contractor, CH2M-WG Idaho, also bought gifts for 250 children in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.



INL employees bought Christmas presents for some 250 children in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.

INL recently announced that employees contributed more than \$238,300 to this year's United Way drive. BEA contributed \$55,000 in corporate funds, making the total INL contribution \$293,300. Since BEA took over operation of INL in 2005, employee contributions to the United Way have totaled nearly \$3 million, and BEA has contributed an additional \$530,000 in corporate donations.

Education Programs

INL's K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education programs invested \$360,000 in K-12 education initiatives to help more than 80,000 students throughout Idaho for Fiscal Year 2014. The lab awarded \$19,000 toward dual credit and college scholarships to high school students, \$2,500 to assist outstanding educators and \$70,000 in minigrants and classroom makeover grants to 27 educators across the state.



A \$10,000 classroom makeover grant went to eastern Idaho's Sandcreek Middle School, where students are learning about the science of panning for gold.

INL also sponsored several community-based STEM education opportunities around the state, including career fairs, Science Extravaganzas, water awareness events, Family STEM Nights, [Idaho Aerospace Scholars program](#), [Eastern Idaho Technical College summer camps](#), Native American STEM Exploration Day, Tournament of Innovation, robotics programs, the Boise State University Engineering Expo and other events. INL provided 15 high school students and four K-12 teachers the opportunity to engage in summer internships at the laboratory.

Since 2010, through its partnership with Idaho's i-STEM initiative, BEA has provided professional STEM development to more than 2,500 teachers and opened six STEM materials resource libraries housed on the campuses of Eastern Idaho Technical College, Idaho State University-College of Technology, College of Southern Idaho, College of Western Idaho, Lewis Clark State College, and North Idaho College.

INL hosted the annual Eastern Idaho Science Bowl Competition reaching 200 middle school and high school students in regions 5 and 6. Combined with other statewide partners, the Idaho Science Bowl reached 629 students from middle schools and high schools across the state. The annual competition tests teams of students' knowledge of science and math while providing excitement and enthusiasm about STEM careers and future workforce opportunities at INL.

Technical Assistance Program

Each year, the [INL technical assistance program](#) (TAP) provides technical expertise to state and local governments, and regional small businesses. The requesting organization can receive, at no cost, up to 40 hours of INL employee time to address technical needs that cannot readily be met by commercially available resources in the region.

INL's TAP is a federally mandated program authorizing INL to share knowledge and specialized equipment to be used to promote U.S. competitiveness. Through TAP, INL scientists and engineers can provide limited, free assistance that is not commercially available in the region to benefit a community or small business. During the past nine years, TAP has sponsored 8,556 hours of assistance to entrepreneurs, small businesses and rural communities. In FY 2014, nine TAP projects with 216 hours of assistance were provided. TAP funding supported innovative approaches to speed technologies to market, including:

- INL's software called Sophia, a system and method for monitoring communications on a network, was licensed to startup cybersecurity company, NexDefense. TAP funding supported the transfer of knowledge between INL and the NexDefense programming teams. The software may soon be used to protect the nation's critical infrastructure.
- INL staff characterized and tested samples of nanomaterials relevant to research and development for a future armor concept that may one day be used to protect troops.
- An eastern Idaho startup company accessed INL's capabilities in order to characterize silicon carbide fibers and perform data analytics on a patent-pending continuous manufacturing process. The lighter, stronger silicon carbide fibers could be used in the transportation, energy and defense market sectors.
- Advancing nuclear fuels research using INL's TAP, Idaho State University obtained glass-blowing expertise for an experiment to develop a method to manufacture depleted uranium microspheres for basic materials science research.



INL nuclear scientist Catherine Riddle demonstrates a nuclear chain reaction to Shoshone Bannock students during the Native American STEM Day event.

Team INL

BEA also supported the community through its [Team INL employee volunteer program](#), which provides small amounts of funding to help employees make a difference in their communities. The funding is often used to purchase building materials, paint, essential items and clothing.

Since 2005, BEA employees and volunteer groups have supported more than 350 Team INL projects, such as providing Christmas gifts each year for the teenagers living at The Haven transitional housing shelter, for several seniors through the Santa for Seniors program and for developmentally disadvantaged individuals living in local group homes.



Children at Camp Magical Moments enjoy the repelling wall provided by INL employees through the Team INL volunteer program.

This year's Team INL employee volunteers also contributed to many area projects. Here are a just a few highlights:

- Helped kids dealing with cancer enjoy the rappelling wall at the Camp Magical Moments, a weeklong event in Swan Valley, Idaho ,
- Held a school supply donation drive to help area less-fortunate K-12 students, and
- Helped with Dream Night at the Tautphaus Park Zoo (an event for chronically ill and disabled children and their immediate families).

Fifty-five participants in INL's License to Lead program took part in three community service projects during 2014. These projects involved: 1) providing major cleanup, painting, repair and landscaping at several CLUB Inc. transition housing shelters; 2) major cleanup and repair at the CLUB Inc. meeting center; 3) painting, landscaping, fencing and fixing safety issues in the playground and courtyard areas at the HELP Inc. office/classroom building; 4) a spring food drive benefiting the Idaho Falls Community Food Bank – over \$5,000 and five pickup loads of food were gathered to benefit individuals in the community struggling to feed themselves or their families. The License to Lead management volunteers spent about 600 hours on these projects in 2014.

In addition to the donations from INL employees and local businesses, License to Lead participants donated approximately \$1,400 in cash and materials to make these projects successful. A major benefit is to build the network of leaders at INL, but more importantly, to serve people in need in the local area. Leaders become aware of the many needs and opportunities for service in communities through these service projects.

Philanthropic Programs

Since its contract began in February 2005, BEA has provided more than \$8 million in corporate funding to numerous educational, philanthropic and technology-based economic development programs. BEA provided funding to Help Inc., The Soup Kitchen, Idaho Falls Rescue Mission, The Shepherd's Inn, The Salvation Army, Idaho Falls Senior Community Center, The Haven, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center, YMCA, FREEMED, Bright Tomorrows Child Advocacy Center, CASA programs, Bingham Crisis Center, Idaho Foodbank, Health West, Lost River Medical Center Foundation, Aid for Friends, Special Olympics and nonprofit agencies that feed, clothe or provide shelter and services to the less fortunate in surrounding communities. INL funds philanthropic projects that focus on community, health and human services, and culture. In total, more than \$1.6 million in corporate funding has been given throughout the past nine years to support more than 100 agencies and programs.

"I am very proud to work for a company that is a good corporate citizen and cares about the local needs," said Lori Priest, INL's community relations coordinator. "We will continue to do our part to support education programs, find avenues to help the less fortunate and support the economic development of the state."

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[Feature Archive](#)

