For Immediate Release:

**“Computer science for all” coming to a school near you**


**Teacher-leaders from 9 districts and 14 schools immersed themselves in computer science training, led by Ann Wright-Mockler (above left) of PNNL.**

By Judith Thomas Tri-Cities, Wash. -- “Nine in 10 parents want their child to study computer science, because they realize that computers and software are changing everything. But only 1 in 4 schools teaches it,” according to [Code.org](https://code.org/), which sponsors the popular “Hour of Code.” Computer science majors have been on the decline in recent years, especially among women.

Under the auspices of the [Mid-Columbia STEM Education Collaboratory](https://www.midcolumbiastem.org/), education experts from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) and the Educational Service District #123 are partnering with the SE Wash. Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) Alliance and Code.org to change this statistic. They are providing free computer science professional development, including code.org Computer Science Fundamentals courses, for K-12 educators in our region.

One such venue was the STEM Leadership Network which is an ongoing forum for principals and their teacher-leaders. Principals focus on how they, as instructional leaders, can support research-based science and integrated STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) instruction through policies and practices. Co-facilitated by STEM education experts Peggy Willcuts of PNNL and Georgia Boatman of ESD 123, they develop a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility for student learning. At each meeting, the leadership teams are immersed in research-based aspects of integrated STEM education and work on action plans for their school or district.

From building awareness to developing expertise, the local computer science workshops take a variety of formats. Sessions are led by facilitators from the Collaboratory’s “Computing the Future” project managed by Ann Wright-Mockler, PNNL’s Office of STEM Education. She and PNNL colleague Elizabeth Stephens, a materials scientist, are trained facilitators for Code.org’s CS Fundamentals course.

It is not a stretch to say that these two education leaders, and their allies, are making it feasible for all schools in our region to add the CS programs parents are seeking for their kids. Local schools, districts and educators can learn more about free local computer science PD opportunities by contacting Ann Wright-Mockler or checking the Mid-Columbia STEM Education Collaboratory [website](https://www.midcolumbiastem.org/) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Mid-Columbia-STEM-Education-Collaboratory-375263165975615/?ref=hl) page. Everyone can help make sure computer science is considered foundational coursework here in Washington by using the #code4all hashtag in your social media posts.

The Collaboratory is a group of 15 local, like-minded organizations that seek to prepare all students for careers and college by working with the local community to improve STEM education through hands-on events, mentoring, resources and professional development. The Collaboratory was conceived of and has been led since 2013 by PNNL/Battelle.