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LEO Announces New MiSTEM Network Regional Director

Position serves Michigan's northwestern Lower Peninsula, covering Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau Counties

LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) announced that **Sarah Roche** has been named Northwestern Lower Peninsula regional director for the MiSTEM Network, which strives to make STEM learning more accessible across the state and position more Michigan students for career success.

"Sarah's leadership and expertise in education will help us empower students and prepare the next generation of innovators for high-wage, high-demand STEM careers," said **Megan Schrauben, MiSTEM executive director**. "As the new Region 13 director, she will lead our Northwestern Lower Peninsula hub toward advancing PK-12 STEM education in an effort to create a vibrant STEM ecosystem here in Michigan where students are prepared to compete and fill the growing, in-demand career opportunities."

Roche has extensive experience in education, including 21 years in an elementary classroom. She spent ten of those years teaching STEM to students in grades K-6. Most recently, Roche spent two and a half years as the elementary STEM teacher for East Jordan Public Schools, where she worked with students and teachers to develop a STEM program for all K-6 students. This work included collaborating with classroom teachers to provide problem, project and place-based learning experiences for students. She received a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and Master of Educational Psychology from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

In her new role with MiSTEM, Roche will utilize her plethora of experience to build collaborative partnerships that align regional activities to the statewide STEM strategy. She will also identify and coordinate resources to support regional STEM stakeholders and activities in the Northwestern Lower Michigan region.

"I am looking forward to connecting with regional stakeholders, STEM professionals and local industry partners in our communities as we work to provide meaningful learning experiences for our students," said **Roche**. "This is an incredible opportunity to advance STEM education within our region."

As one of 16 regional hubs focused on identifying and addressing STEM education needs across the state, Region 13 spans several counties that include Northwest Education Services (North Ed) and Char-Em Intermediate School District service areas. With support from the intermediate

school districts, Roche will coordinate and oversee the progress of STEM education activities in the region and align efforts with the state's goals.

"We are thrilled to have Sarah serving as Region 13 director for the MiSTEM Network," said **Matt Olson, assistant superintendent of professional learning and innovation at North Ed**. "Sarah brings a wealth of experience in the classroom to this position, and we know her talents and leadership will be valuable assets in support of STEM education throughout the region."

Learn more about MiSTEM Region 13 at mistemregion13.com and the MiSTEM Network at michigan.gov/MiSTEM.