



## GENERAL NEWS



January 2022

### STEM for All

As we flip the calendar to a new year, it's time for setting new goals. Yet some of our resolutions are not new because it is work that takes years, decades, even lifetimes. Sometimes you make progress only to realize so much more is needed. When we founded this organization, we wanted to make inspiring STEM learning experiences accessible for every child, family, and school. Over the years, many people joined the cause and helped us reach hundreds of thousands in our greater community with unique, hands-on STEM learning experiences. We started with mobile programs, driving to schools and venues across the region, then added our interim home and first science center, the Children's Science Center Lab, and continually worked to build a large regional science center to expand mission both within and beyond our walls. All of this was done with the aim of reaching all across our large, diverse community. The global and societal challenges in 2020 and 2021 taught us just how important this work is and how much more effort is needed to accomplish this goal.



There are many steps to building a science center and a new institution, from designing exhibits and programs to planning the building and facilities, yet the human foundation we are laying is the most important. Please read more below about two such areas: our efforts to grow youth development programs and our work to ensure greater diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in our organization, for those we serve, and our greater community. Together we can achieve "STEM for All".

Sincerely,

**Nene Spivy**  
Executive Director

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### Career Connection Event

Hosted by the Youth Advisory Board

**Saturday, February 5**  
**2:00-4:00 pm timed-entry session**

Join the Youth Advisory Board at the Lab  
for a fun-filled event! Guests can meet and

engage with experts studying or working in the disciplines of Astronomy, Chemistry, Engineering, and Environmental Science, all while completing exciting activities and experiments relating to each field.

To attend the event, simply register for the afternoon timed-entry session. Save \$2 per ticket when you purchase online!

[Register Here!](#)



## Our Commitment to DEAI Redoubling Our Efforts

In early 2020, funding from the Peter and Mary Levin Foundation supported our efforts to increase capacity to broaden STEM participation for underrepresented audiences. This grant allowed us to implement a year-long training program and enabled us to continue our long-standing commitment to reach diverse audiences with scholarship programming.

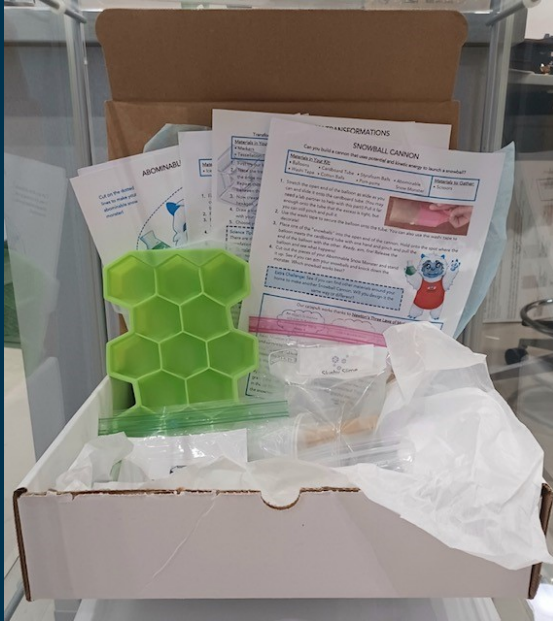
Through this work, the ensuing global pandemic and its societal impacts, and the demands for social justice and racial equity after the murder of George Floyd, it became clear that our organization could do much more to engage *all* members of our community and support our staff through the lenses of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. We thought critically about our organizational culture and practices and the need to prepare our team to better serve all in our large, diverse community as we grow into a full-scale regional science center in the coming years. We sought out resources and training from our industry associations and community.

In our 2021 annual plan, we committed to developing a multi-year Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Roadmap to drive our annual and strategic planning process. We applied for the DC Step Up Program at Deloitte which provided a team of consultants to assist us in developing the Road Map. With the help of the Deloitte Team, staff, and board members, we used a measured and collaborative approach to identify a wide range of opportunities to create a more inclusive environment for staff, volunteers, and the audiences we serve. While we have been dedicated to ensuring we reach diverse members of our community since our earliest days, we are redoubling our efforts and are committed to achieving more enduring diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

[Learn More](#)



**Popular STEM Kits are Still Available**  
**\$5 Off with Visit to the Lab!**



Our popular STEM kits are selling fast! With 5 \*Cool\* experiments, supplies, and instructions, these kits are perfect for the STEM-loving child in your life.

Squish, mix, and manipulate two different polymers with Slushy Slime! Create your own bath bomb to keep or give as a gift, fire off snowballs in the DIY Snowball Cannon, and more!

Be prepared for the next snow day and order your kits today! Plan to visit the Lab? Save \$5 and purchase while visiting! Kit pick-up is through February 13 during timed-entry sessions while supplies last!

Buy Now!

## Honoring an Outstanding Dedication to STEM

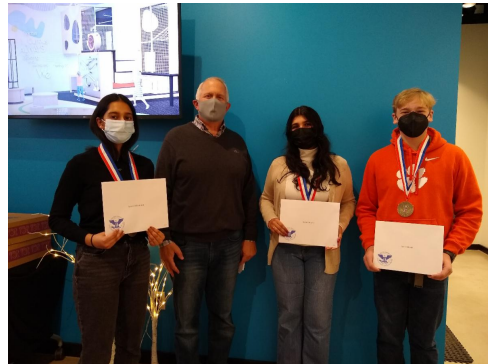
### Youth Volunteers Selected for Prestigious Award

This past Saturday, we celebrated an outstanding commitment to STEM!

Six of our young adult volunteers were awarded the President's Volunteer Service Award for the hours they have given to the Children's Science Center Lab. Learn more about this prestigious award [here](#).

Congratulations to the following volunteers:

- **Gitali Bhanot** -- Summer Camp Intern, Winter Camps
- **Justin Burke** – Youth Advisory Board
- **Medha Gaddam** – Summer Camp Intern, Latina SciGirls
- **Carolyn Kiewel** – Youth Advisory Board
- **Ananya Malipeddi** – Summer Lab Intern, Youth Advisory Board
- **Dhyaaneshvaran Ravichandran** – Summer Camp Intern



From June 2020 to May 2021, each of these volunteers provided over 100 service hours to our organization, helping inspire a love of STEM in Northern Virginia children and families. This is a huge accomplishment with all of the other responsibilities students have. We are grateful that these outstanding young people chose to support the Science Center!

## Youth Internship Applications are Open

### Apply for Spring/Summer 2022 Opportunities





### STEM Youth Development Internship

Available to high school students ages 16+ who have a passion for STEM learning. They will be able to develop professional skills at the Lab while engaging in various hands-on activities.

Applications due by 5:00 pm on January 24, 2022.

[Apply Now](#)



### Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) Internship

Available to rising high school seniors and rising first year college/university students who are 17+ and interested in learning more about cyber security as a possible career option.

Applications due by 5:00 pm on February 15, 2022.

[Apply Now](#)

## Volunteer Spotlight

Hayley Greene

**How did you first learn about the Children's Science Center Lab?** I learned about the Children's Science Center Lab through my high school newsletter (South Lakes High School). Our career center specialist sends a weekly email to us with scholarships and work opportunities. I became interested and learned about how the Children's Science Center Lab works with kids to teach them about STEM-related topics in a variety of different ways. This email in particular offered an internship to work alongside staff at the center, which seemed pretty interesting to me! After applying for the internship, I began to look through the videos of STEM interviews, they were all extremely insightful.



**Tell us a little bit about yourself: Where are you from, occupation, home life, etc.** I'm from Virginia, and I'm a senior at South Lakes High School. I will be graduating soon, and I can't wait! I plan to attend a 4-year college and pursue a degree in social work. I love to read, draw, and learn about science. Biology, geology, and astronomy are my favorite scientific subjects. I have three lovely pets, two cats named Chanel and Prada, and one dog, named Brownie. I am president of the South Lakes Book Club, and we meet monthly to discuss books and enjoy snacks together. It's very fun! I am also a part of the SLHS Environmental Club, where we focus on solving issues like global warming, discuss ways to be environmentally friendly, and do cool activities together.

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering with the SciCenter?** I enjoy getting the parents' and children's reactions when they work with the variety of things we have to offer

at the Lab, from making slime to building their own bugs in the Tinker Shop. All of their positive and inquisitive attitudes made me love being at the Lab the most! They are always so appreciative of everyone there which brings me a great feeling. I like being able to assist in their learning and explain to them that they can do anything they set their minds to with science. The Science Center also encourages us to share any and all ideas we have! I often feel discouraged to do so in other settings, but at the Science Center, I share my opinions, and there's always a person willing to hear me out and help me create something entirely new.

**What scientist do you admire most and why?** The scientist I admire the most is Gladys West. I relate to her as a Black woman interested in STEM. Without her contributions to the invention of the GPS, we wouldn't have successfully developed the technology we use on a daily basis today. Her hard work and dedication have paved the way for everyone today, and I admire that. She is an inspiration to me in many ways, and I realize that I can do anything as long as I put a little effort in and work diligently. She truly was a strong woman! Fighting through racial inequality and poverty was a feat many were unable to achieve when she was younger.

**How can we inspire young people to become interested in science?** One way is by showing them that science is all around us. There are elements in the air we breathe, molecular structures in the food we eat, and scientific process carried out within our bodies. Allowing them to explore these concepts on their own time is what really encourages interest and passion. Some kids cannot become passionate in a classroom setting, and that's okay! Having clubs and events offered for their interests may be their forte because it's something they can choose to do on their own. The Children's Science Center Lab does a tremendous job at giving these opportunities to people of all ages.

**What is one scientific question you would like to see answered in your lifetime?** The one scientific question that I'd like to be answered is: why do we dream? I learned about dreams in a psychology class at school, and I know there are several theories and conflicting opinions from the science world. I'd like to see a definitive answer to the question while I'm around because I'm super curious about it! It's a mystery to me.

*Hayley is currently a senior at South Lakes High School and now works part-time at the Children's Science Center Lab.*

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## Try It At Home

### Snowstorm in a Jar

As winter sets in, finding ways to have fun and stay warm are more important than ever. Are your children interested in chemistry? One of the best ways to engage kids in STEM learning is by experimenting with chemical reactions.

In this activity, bring to life our recent snowy weather by creating a chemical reaction between acids and bases — all with materials you can find around your home!



Try it At Home!

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