

The Science Center of Iowa engages and inspires Iowans along their journey of lifelong science learning.





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Since taking the helm as president of this organization, one of my goals has been to expand engagement across the state to truly be the Science Center of lowa.

SCIENCE CENTER OF IOWA & BLANK IMAX® DOME THEATER

This year, we expanded our statewide presence, increased engagement with diverse audiences and learned how SCI has impacted the lives of our visitors. SCI staff expanded opportunities to engage educators while supporting their commitment to advancing STEM learning. We forged new partnerships and engaged stakeholders to help us build more mission and increase access to STEM opportunities for lifelong learners across the state.

In the following pages, you will read about our efforts to engage and inspire through informal learning, empower educators statewide and expand partnerships to increase equity and access.

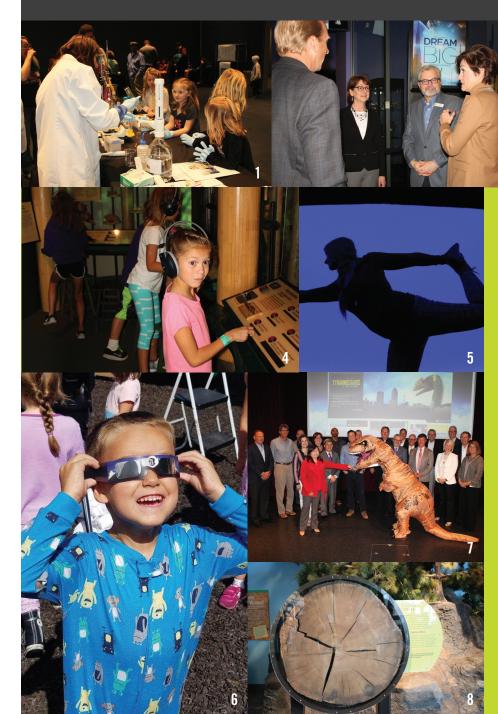
This is a launching point, as we continue to strive toward our vision of being lowa's resource for experiencing science and the world around us.

Thank you to SCI board and staff who have played a role in our successes this year and to the individuals, companies and institutions who have invested in our mission – to engage and inspire lowans along their journey of lifelong science learning.

Curt Simmons President & CEO

MILESTONES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS





1. Girls in Science – More than xxx girls and xxx mentors participated in SCI's Girls in Science events this year. This ongoing initiative continues to provide information and opportunities for girls to meet and interact with female STEM role models. **2.** *Dream Big* – Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds attended the premiere of the IMAX film Dream Big: Engineering Our World, and spoke to attendees about the important role of STEM education in lowa. 3. **D-Day** – On June 7, 2017, we held a special event honoring military veterans for the opening of the IMAX documentary *D-Day: Normandy* 1944 and a mini exhibit created by local historian Mel Pins. 4. Wild Music -Through interactive exhibits and sound experiences, visitors learned about the biological origins of music with the traveling exhibit Wild Music: Sounds and Songs of Life, which SCI hosted October 1, 2016, through May 29, 2017. **5. Yoga Under the Stars** – This new weekly program was developed in an effort to engage audiences with SCI's spaces outside of regular hours. **6. Solar eclipse** – The "Great American Eclipse" inspired people from coast to coast. SCI hosted more than 2500 people at the Capitol for a viewing event and acted as a local expert for media before, during and after the eclipse. **7. Tyrannosaurs** announcement – The Board of Directors celebrated the announcement of SCI's next traveling exhibit, Tyrannosaurs: Meet the Family. 8. Tree slice - As part of exhibit renovations made possible through funding from the State Historical Society of Iowa, a slice of Iowa's oldest oak species was installed in the What On Earth? exhibit.

ENGAGING AND INSPIRING THROUGH INFORMAL LEARNING

"We love the focus on social and emotional development as well as incorporating STEM in such creative and fun ways. We are happy as parents, but most importantly, my daughter loves going to school."—SCI Preschool Parent

Whether it's onsite visitors, children in a school assembly or people attending a community event, our goal is to inspire "a-ha!" moments for lowans of all ages and backgrounds.

By focusing on informal learning, where learners acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experiences, we encourage people to make their own discoveries... and have fun!





WE NURTURE EARLY LEARNERS.

Approximately 40% of U.S. children are not ready for kindergarten, and too many children reach elementary school lacking key science and math skills and knowledge. The SCI Preschool, with 112 students each year, encourages students to learn using The Project Approach, which supports a child's natural inclination to explore and play. Other early childhood programs include Pint Size Science and Storytime Under the Stars.

WE GIVE PEOPLE THE SPACE TO CREATE.

When learning is less about *what* you learn and more about *how* you learn, creativity flourishes. Recently, this process-not-product-ideology has taken shape in the "Makers Movement." At SCI, "making" is a way of thinking - a creative movement that has people innovating and learning with their hands. Through exhibits, activities and workshops, participants are encouraged to design, test and, yes, even fail as they discover new ways of solving problems.

WE DEVELOP SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE.

Recognizing the important role technology will play in the future workforce, we have made it a priority to integrate STET throughout our programming. In the Preschool, students learn simple programming using Bee Bot. Every SCI camp — whether it's for Pre-K or 8th grade — includes a tech or coding component. Building these skills now sets students up for future success.

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS STATEWIDE

"These outreach programs are very important to children in this area who may not have the opportunity to visit the Science Center of Iowa." -Mt. Ayr Librarian

In our efforts to engage and inspire lowans along their journey of lifelong science learning, we recognize the importance and value of educators. By bringing the strategies of informal learning to these environments, SCI is able to provide programs and resources that support classroom curriculum and help teachers.

SCI programs empower educators of all kinds – from classroom teachers to local libraries, after-school programs to homeschool groups. By working together, we help ensure lowans students receive a robust and well-rounded education.









WE SUPPORT CLASSROOM CURRICULUM.

More than 30,000 students attend SCI via school field trips each year, and an average of more than 20,000 participate in SCI programming through Science @ Your Site outreach. With exhibits, IMAX films and interactive science programs that tie to curriculum standards, like the Next Generation Science Standards and Iowa CORE, SCI reinforces in-classroom goals.

WE PROVIDE TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE CLASSROOM.

Using best practices of informal learning, we have developed innovative programs that provide educators with tools and strategies to use in their classroom. As a member of the lowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council since 2014, we have reached more than 1,400 educators with two programs:

- Pint Size Science, which shows educators how to use their knowledge of children's backgrounds and interests to help them develop inquiry skills for exploring basic phenomena and materials of the world.
- Making STEM Connections, a program that provides conceptual materials and professional development for bringing the Maker's Movement into their learning space.

In addition, SCI staff is certified to train educators statewide on the Dimensions of Success (DoS) observation tool. Under the DoS framework, activities are scored based on observations and field notes. These scores are used to objectively gauge program quality

WE COLLABORATE WITH FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATORS.

Education and learning environments don't always look like traditional classrooms. Through programs like our Homeschool Science Series and Summer Reading Program, we are able to expand our impact and support a common goal: engaging and inspiring students.

EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE EQUITY AND ACCESS

EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE EQUITY AND ACCESS

As the Science Center of Iowa, we are committed to serving all Iowans, which means intentionally seeking ways to engage underserved audiences and increase equity and access throughout our programs.

By partnering with individuals and organizations who share this priority, we have been able to expand our offerings and reach broader audiences. In addition to being the right thing to do, we believe it is the recipe for success and sustainability.







TOGETHER, WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE STEM LITERACY.

By offering ongoing free programs like Café Scientifique and Star Parties as well as free admission on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we are able to engage new audiences in SCI programming. These activities, along with the unique experiences of Pint Size Science and SCI camps, create opportunities for children and adults to access authentic educational experiences and advance their STEM learning.

TOGETHER, WE PROVIDE "STEM FOR ALL" THROUGH OUR ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY FUND.

The Access and Accessibility Fund provides discounted admissions for school group visits from September through February. It is an effort to engage schools where budgets have continued to shrink. This connects school-aged children to STEM experiences they would not normally have access to.

TOGETHER, WE FORM PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE LEARNING FOR ALL.

Partnerships are critical to enhancing and expanding resources in our community. Intentionally, SCI collaborates with corporate and private entities to increase our ability to engage new and existing audiences and inspire the next scientist, doctor, carpenter, welder, etc. These partnerships help expand initiatives and projects to create low or no cost experiences for at-risk and diverse audiences.

ENHANCING **CURRICULUM AND EMPOWERING EDUCATORS**

Whether in the classroom or after school. we provide resources and opportunities for learners of all ages. Our work with educators expands that impact.

Camps

3.403 students participated in Summer and Winter Camps to keep their brains sharp while on break.



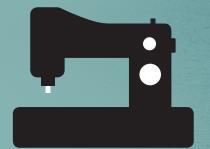
Outreach

Our educational outreach program provided more than 1,860 hours of science programming to schools and libraries across the state.



Resources

Our Science Learning Team (along with 203 sewing machines) traveled to every corner of the state delivering Making STEM Connections Kits to help educators create makerspaces in their classrooms.



OUT-OF-THIS WORLD **ENGAGEMENT**

2017 was an exciting year in space! Along with monthly Star Party events, we took astronomy on the road and participated in the Great American Eclipse.

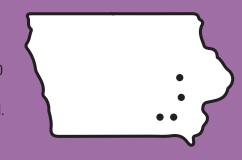
Star Parties

These monthly events provide free opportunities for the community to explore astronomy and view everything from common astronomical occurrences to rare cosmic phenomena through highpowered telescopes.



Star Tours

Star Parties went on the road to communities across lowa and engaged more than 1,100 people in Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Ottumwa and Fairfield.



Solar Eclipse

The "Great American Eclipse" passed through lowa on August 21, 2017. Before, during and after the eclipse, SCI served as a source of information regarding the eclipse and how to view it safely. More than 2,500 people attended SCI's viewing event at the lowa State Capitol.



IMPACT REPORT

SCI engages and inspires lowans along their journey of lifelong science learning thanks to support from our generous donors, sponsors and partners.

TOTAL PARTICIPATION = 326,246

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE = 185,476

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE = 53,074

OFF-SITE PROGRAMMING =

87,696

The following contributions were made through generous support of specific projects, programs and films at the Science Center of Iowa and Blank IMAX Dome Theater between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017.

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SCI works to engage a wide community audience to develop meaningful partnerships and new initiatives that inspire curious minds of all ages. Partnerships and sponsorships from the following organizations help SCI engage and inspire lifelong learning in all of us.





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TRY THE COVER EXPERIMENT AT HOME!

SLIME!

Materials

- 1 cup washable clear glue
- 2 cups water, separated
- 1/2 tsp. Borax powder**
- Gel food coloring of choice

Steps

- 1. Mix 1 cup of clear glue and 1 cup of water. Stir to combine.
- 2. Mix ½ teaspoon of Borax powder with 1 cup of hot water.
- 3. Add the borax water mixture to the glue water mixture and stir.
- 4. Once slime has formed, move it to a dry bowl. Knead in a couple drops of food coloring.

Slime can be stored in a container with a lid for up to two weeks.

Mix it Up: Alternately, you can try experimenting with the order in which you mix ingredients. See what happens if you mix the glue into the Borax – or if you use more/less water. It's all part of the scientific process!

**The Great Slime Debate

There's been some controversy lately about the safety of using Borax to make slime. Some reports claim that slime made with borax may cause eye, skin and respiratory irritation. However, research shows that — unless your recipe calls for tasting the slime (which we do not recommend!) — Borax shouldn't affect skin, especially at the amount being used. However, the alternative to Borax is contact solution, which also should not be ingested. So use your best judgement. If your child is likely to ingest the ingredients of this experiment, maybe try something else! And if Borax is ingested, you should contact the American Association of Poison Control at 800-222-1222 immediately.

