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 Iowa.

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 Iowa’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 Iowans along their journey of lifelong science learning.

Curt Simmons
President & CEO
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 Iowans 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!
In our efforts to engage and inspire Iowans 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 Iowans students receive a robust and well-rounded education.

“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
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.

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.

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.

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 OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE STEM LITERACY.

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.

TOGETHER, WE FORM PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE LEARNING FOR ALL.
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.

TOTAL PARTICIPATION = 326,246
PUBLIC ATTENDANCE = 185,476
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE = 53,074
OFF-SITE PROGRAMMING = 87,696

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

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.

Solar Eclipse
The “Great American Eclipse” passed through Iowa 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 Iowa State Capitol.

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

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 high-powered telescopes.

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.

OUT-OF-THIS WORLD ENGAGEMENT

IMPACT REPORT
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.

$50,000 and above

$25,000 - $49,999

$10,000 - $24,999

SPONSORSHIPS & GRANTS

The following local governments committed a portion of their hotel/motel tax in FY 16–17:

- Altoona
- Ankeny
- Bondurant
- Carlisle
- Des Moines
- Indianola
- Johnston
- Norwalk
- Pleasant Hill
- Urbandale
- Waukee
- West Des Moines
- Windsor Heights

PUBLIC SUPPORT

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.

BRAVO Greater Des Moines Fund:

The following local governments committed a portion of their hotel/motel tax in FY 16–17:

Atlantic Bottling Company
European Motorcars
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Kriz Scrap
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Twin Cities PBS
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With sincere appreciation, the Science Center of Iowa acknowledges the extraordinary support of all our donors. Your gifts enable us to engage and inspire through programming, experience platforms, IMAX documentary films and so much more. Thank you for making this possible. We make every effort to acknowledge our donors appropriately. If we have made an error, please contact the Development Office at 515-274-8668 ext. 223 or development@sciowa.org.

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Each year, SCI engages more than 320,000 children, school groups and adults in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) through interactive exhibits, live programs, IMAX films, special events, classes and camps. SCI’s Annual Fundraising Event and Auction contributes more than $200,000 to these vast opportunities. Special thanks to Ed Wilson, who served as the 2017 Annual Event Master of Ceremonies.

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2017 ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT & AUCTION
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.