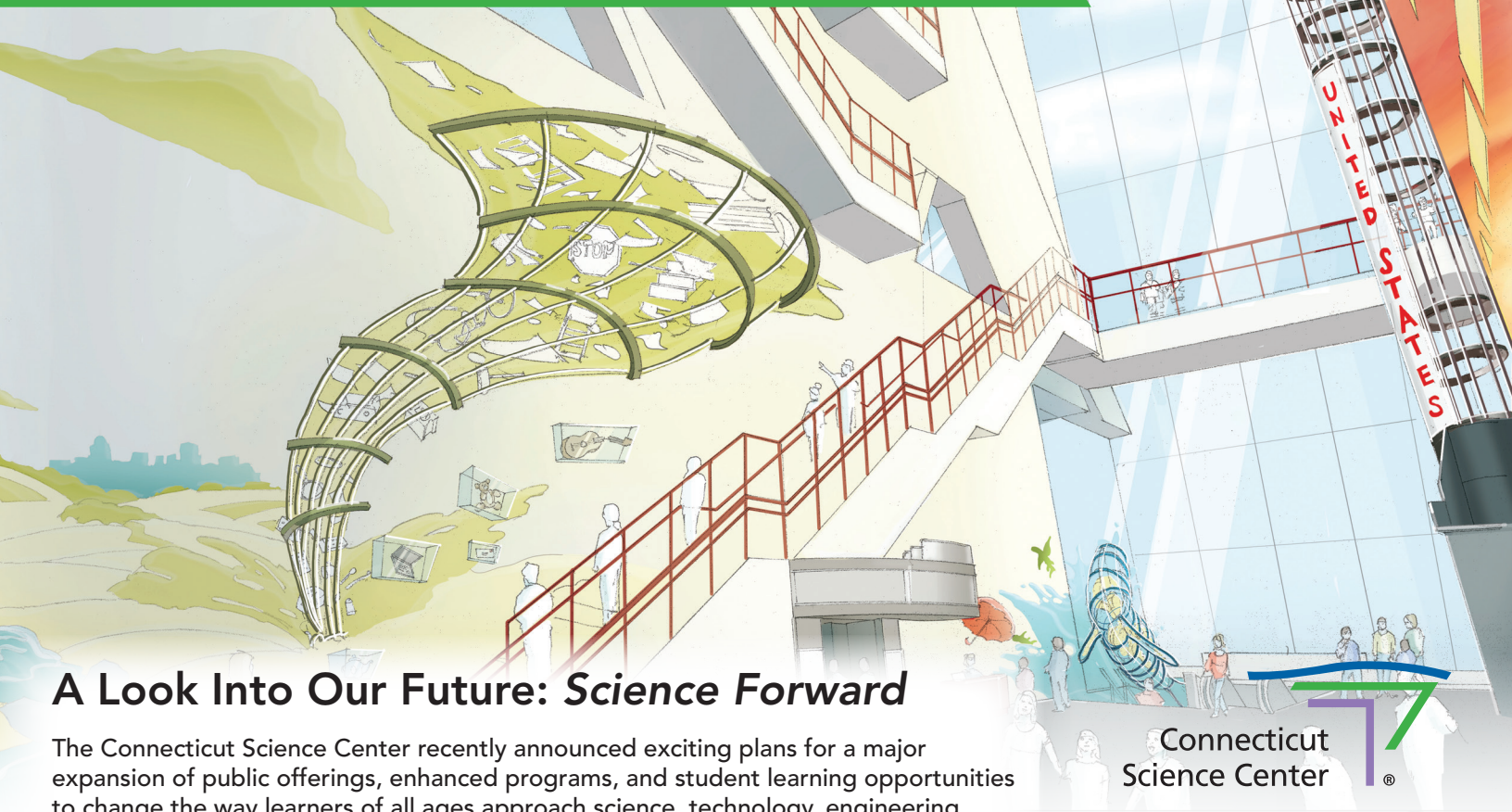


# News from the Connecticut Science Center



## A Look Into Our Future: Science Forward

The Connecticut Science Center recently announced exciting plans for a major expansion of public offerings, enhanced programs, and student learning opportunities to change the way learners of all ages approach science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning experiences. The enhancements will transform the visitor experience from the moment of entry and through each exhibit gallery of Connecticut's foremost informal STEM learning destination.

The initiative, named *Science Forward*, will include exhibit additions and augmentations, as well as adaptable classroom and laboratory venues to meet the growing statewide demand for STEM learning spaces. Rolling out over the next five years, this work will be keyed to science curriculum needs and the state's future economic and workforce requirements while also adding value to one of Connecticut's leading tourism destinations. STEM professionals and educators at the Science Center's Mandell Academy for Teachers are working closely with the State Department of Education to train teachers, readying them to incorporate the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) into their everyday curricula and teaching practices as well as into exhibits and programs at the Science Center.

"The Connecticut Science Center is playing a pivotal role in changing the way science is taught, how students are learning, and helping teachers incorporate the Next Generation Science Standards into the classroom," said Commissioner of Education Dianna R. Wentzell. "The shared public and private investment that created the Science Center gave our state and its children a tremendous opportunity to reinvigorate interest in science and advance science instruction and learning, and we are so pleased to see that shared commitment continue in this way."

Like the original state-led development of the Science Center, the *Science Forward* initiative is funded by a public-private partnership. The funding includes \$10.5 million approved by the state in 2014, plus \$5.5 million pledged by a wide range of generous corporations, foundations, and individuals, led by the Science Center's all-volunteer Board of Trustees. Leading donors include Travelers, United Technologies Corporation, the Maximilian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation, Stanley Black and Decker, Pitney Bowes Foundation, Roger & Sondra Beit, Mark & Luanne Paley, the Cheryl Chase and Stuart Bear Family Foundation, the Barnes Group, Charles & Christine Shivery, John & Tamara Lundgren, and Shipman & Goodwin. ■

Connecticut  
Science Center

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

#### Spooktacular Science Weekend

Saturday, October 22 &  
Sunday, October 23  
11:00AM–4:00PM



#### Liquid Lounge: Legends Never Die

Friday, October 21  
6:00PM – 10:00PM

#### Art & Technology Presentation with New Media Artist Balam Soto

Wednesday, October 26  
6:00PM–7:30PM

## Staff Profile: *Kathy Fitzgerald*

My name is Kathy Fitzgerald, and I am the Camp Director for the Vacation Exploration Camps at the Connecticut Science Center. Along with a team of STEM Educators, we are responsible for developing themes for camp, as well as designing and preparing the science activities for the campers. We are constantly implementing new learning experiences as well as incorporating camper favorites.

Throughout my time as a student and educator, I have realized there is a serious disconnect in science between what is learned inside a classroom and everything that occurs outside a classroom. At Science Center camp, kids get the opportunity to control their learning by designing and participating in their own investigations. They are learning the same concepts that are introduced at school but in a relaxed atmosphere that proves science is all around us. Even better, campers are able to work collaboratively, helping and challenging one another to do their best. Campers also get the opportunity to discover science in areas they are already interested in like LEGO and Star Wars.

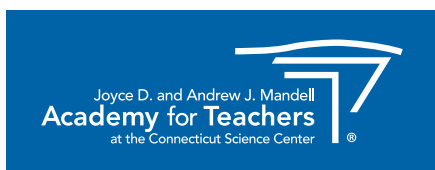
My favorite part of the Vacation Exploration Camp is building relationships with the campers and their families. Many campers attend year after year, and it has been amazing to watch them grow in their learning. These families have been integral in helping our program evolve and flourish over time.

This winter, kids in grades 1-6 will have the opportunity to participate in Vacation Exploration Camps and have fun while school is out. To learn more about our winter offerings, visit [CTScienceCenter.org/programs/camps](http://CTScienceCenter.org/programs/camps). ■



*Above:* Kathy Fitzgerald (left), our Camp Director, with Governor Dannel Malloy (right).

*Below:* Kids show learning is fun in one of our popular Summer Vacation Exploration Camps.



## Integrating School and Afterschool Programming

The Science Center's preferred way of working with schools is our "Whole School model"—engaging teachers and administrators from all grades and disciplines in inquiry-based professional development (PD) in order to change the culture of the school and create a consistent experience for students across grades and classes.

In a unique new partnership with West Middle School and the Hartford Boys and Girls Club (BGC), the Science Center is expanding that model and working not only with classroom teachers at West Middle but also with afterschool program providers at the Boys and Girls Club. The Science Center has designed a new PD workshop specifically for the BGC staff. This training introduces inquiry learning and helps the staff plan a six-week afterschool robotics program for grades 3-4. The afterschool robotics program will serve as the foundation for a grades 5-8 robotics program taking place at the school.

Research on education consistently shows that what happens outside of the normal school day has a real and powerful impact on students' academic success. By working with both West Middle and the Boys and Girls Club, the Science Center's partnership links the in-school and out-of-school experience, enhancing the impact of both on students in Hartford's Asylum Hill neighborhood.

This work is made possible thanks to the generous funding of The Hartford. ■



Thank you for your support of the Connecticut Science Center.

The Connecticut Science Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

For additional information, contact John Bourdeaux, Vice President of Advancement, at (860) 520-2131 or [jboudeaux@CTScienceCenter.org](mailto:jboudeaux@CTScienceCenter.org).

Connecticut Science Center  
250 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103