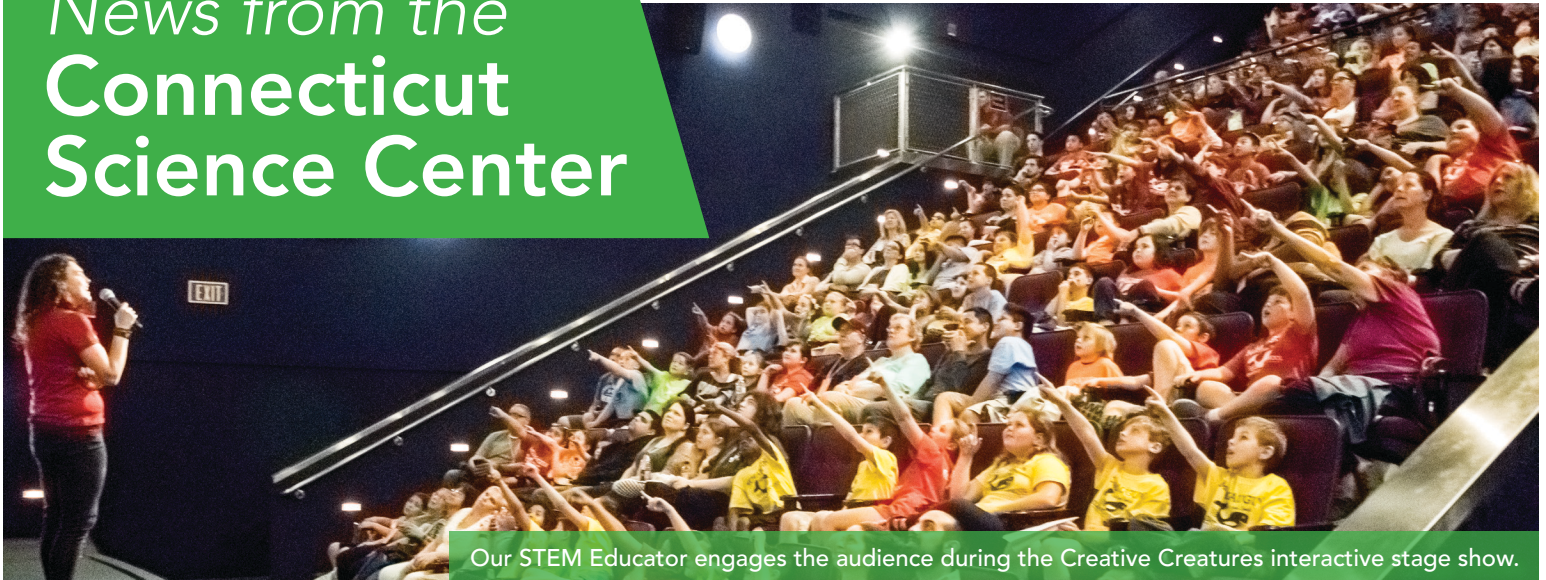


# News from the Connecticut Science Center



Our STEM Educator engages the audience during the Creative Creatures interactive stage show.

## Science Comes Alive with Interactive, Multimedia Stage Shows

Lizards, humanoid robots, live underwater expeditions, and exploding eggs are just a few of the amazing experiences students and families will encounter in the Maximilian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation Science Theater this year. Theater programs are being enhanced beyond movies to offer live, interactive science shows presented by our own STEM Educators, science and education specialists at the Connecticut Science Center.

Science comes alive for students through a lively mix of demonstrations, question and answer challenges, and multimedia presentations on the big screen. Current live science shows include *Creative Creatures*, exploring the physical and behavioral adaptations of live animals; *Rockin' Robots*, an introduction to robotics, programming, and functions; and *Forces and Motion*, an egg-smashing presentation of Newtonian principles. This summer will also feature *Nautilus Live*, a high-seas collaboration with famed ocean explorer Dr. Robert Ballard.

Since their inception, these programs have been seen by nearly 20,000 students, bringing science, technology, engineering, and math to life while providing yet another route to spark interest in these important fields. Theater offerings for school groups and the general public can be found at [CTScienceCenter.org/visit](http://CTScienceCenter.org/visit). ■



Connecticut Science Center

The Connecticut Science Center inspires lifelong learning through interactive and innovative experiences that explore our changing world through science.

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

#### Wild Kratts Animal Expedition

Friday, July 8 & Saturday, July 9  
11:00AM–3:00PM

#### Summer Vacation Exploration Camps

Weekly: Monday, July 11–  
Friday, August 19

## Congratulations to the STEM Achievement Award & Women in Science Leadership Honorees

The Connecticut Science Center recently hosted its annual awards breakfast honoring individuals and organizations who make outstanding contributions in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and STEM education and workforce development in Connecticut. Congratulations to these 2016 honorees.

#### STEM Achievement Awards

Individual: Walter Nakonechny,  
The Jackson Laboratory

Organization: Connecticut Invention  
Convention

#### Petit Family Foundation

#### Women in Science Leadership Award

Jonna Gerken, Pratt & Whitney

Nominations for the 2017 Awards will open on September 6, 2016. Visit [CTScienceCenter.org](http://CTScienceCenter.org) to learn more. ■

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GREEN  
GALA

at the Pratt &  
Whitney Hangar

Friday, September 23  
6:30PM–Midnight



## Meet STEM Program Manager Nicholas Balisciano

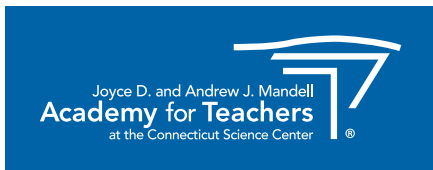
We are in an exciting, transformative period in STEM education, due in part to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which lay out a bold, comprehensive vision for K-12 science education. I joined the Connecticut Science Center last fall because it is, without question, at the forefront of science education reform in our state.

My work at the Science Center is a natural extension of my 14 years of experience as a classroom teacher, a program manager for non-profit education and workforce development initiatives, and a core contributor to partnership efforts such as the NGSS State Leadership Team. At the Science Center, I work with our STEM Educators and Professional Development staff to develop, implement, and continuously improve our programs using evidence- and research-based best practices. This work includes a substantial update to the Science Center's Mandell Academy Inquiry for Teaching and Learning professional development series. This update will better support whole-school instructional reform; provide multiple new offerings to improve educators' understanding of NGSS and advance their pedagogical abilities; and create new Science Center Discovery Center and Outreach offerings for students designed to align with NGSS and further enhance the Science Center's unique role in STEM education.

Together with other members of the Science Center's education staff, I work to determine how the Science Center can further support both formal and informal science education through the evolution of our portfolio of STEM programming for educators and students. The Connecticut Science Center is taking STEM education into the future, and I am very proud to be a part of this challenging, important, and fulfilling work! ■



Above: Nicholas Balisciano (right), our STEM Program Manager, discussing the results of a program in development with Science Center STEM Educators.



## Statewide Impact Expands through New Bristol Public Schools Partnership

The Connecticut Science Center works in close partnership with schools and districts across the state, helping educators reinvigorate their teaching and transform learning in their classrooms. One of the biggest challenges faced by the Science Center and our school partners is time. Between teaching, grading, and preparing lesson plans, the hours they need to invest to reshape their approach to pedagogy and learn new content can be hard to find.

Understanding this limitation, the Connecticut Science Center's Professional Development (PD) team worked closely with district leaders in Bristol to create a customized training program that fits into the district's existing PD schedule. Over the past school year, the Science Center worked closely with teacher leaders representing Bristol's six K-5 and two K-8 schools to introduce the science practices of the Next Generation Science Standards, which were recently adopted by the State Board of Education. This customized Professional Development series also took into account other training recently completed by the participating teachers and incorporated Common Core English Language Arts. By developing a customized training module to meet the current needs of the school district, the Connecticut Science Center was able to maximize teacher learning.

The Connecticut Science Center and Bristol Schools plan to move forward with this partnership in the coming school year, introducing additional cohorts of trainees and continuing to train the teacher leaders to build capacity and transform teaching and learning in the district over the long term. Special thanks to The Barnes Foundation for supporting this critical work. ■



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 jbourdeaux@CTScienceCenter.org.

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