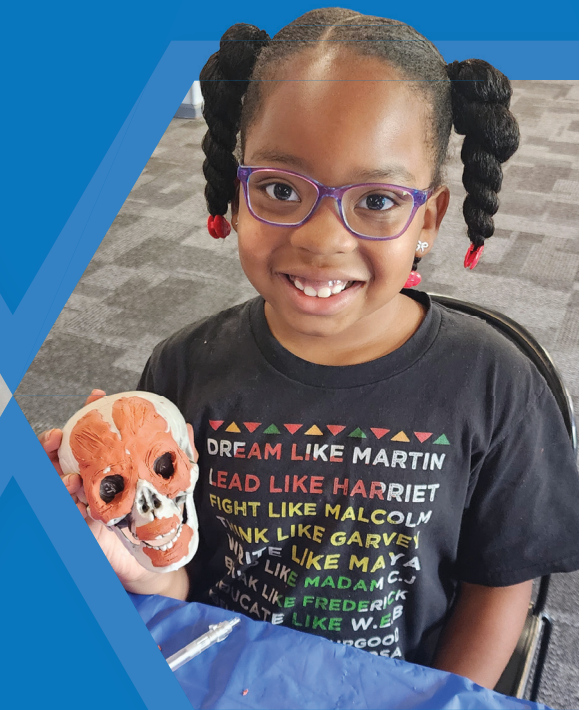


10 YEARS OF INSPIRING SCIENTIFIC  
WONDER, LEARNING, AND PURSUIT

# 20 ANNUAL 25 REPORT



HOMEWOOD  
SCIENCE  
CENTER

2016

10

2026



### NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# Inspiring Scientific Wonder, Learning, and Pursuit

Dear Friends,

**FOR TEN YEARS**, Homewood Science Center has been a place where **curiosity** is welcomed, **questions** are encouraged, and families discover the **joy of science** together. Our mission is simple yet powerful: to inspire scientific wonder, learning, and pursuit — and to ensure that every child, regardless of background or circumstance, has access to meaningful STEM experiences.

This report tells a story of possibility — and it begins with you. What started ten years ago with the vision and support of the Village of Homewood

has grown into a vibrant community science center, made possible by the generosity of our donors, partners, and supporters. Together, you have helped Homewood Science Center inspire scientific wonder, learning, and pursuit for children and families across the Chicago Southland.

Thank you for believing in the power of science to open doors and bring communities together.

Warm regards,  
**EDIE DOBREZ**

## MISSION + IMPACT SNAPSHOT

# A Year of Impact

### STEM SATURDAYS

**3,979** visits | **19%** increase from 2024

In 2025, nearly half of registered households returned 3 or more times

### FIELD TRIPS

**5,422** STUDENTS **68%** low income **84%** minorities

**27** SCHOOL DISTRICTS

**70** SCHOOL AND ORGANIZATIONS

### SUMMER CAMPS

Hosted **114** **STUDENTS**, ages 5-14, in **9 different camps**

### GIRLS STEAM

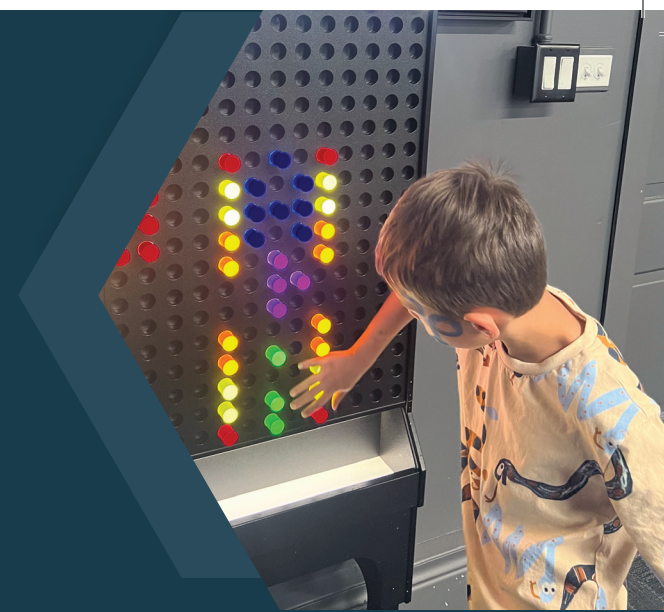
**81%** of Girls STEAM attendees developed **new education & career interests**

**127** students attending Title 1 schools

# STEM Saturdays

## Deepening Engagement at Homewood Science Center

In 2025, nearly half of registered households returned three or more times. This dramatic increase in repeat engagement reflects the strength of STEM Saturdays, the trust of families, and the value of free, accessible, hands-on STEM learning experiences.

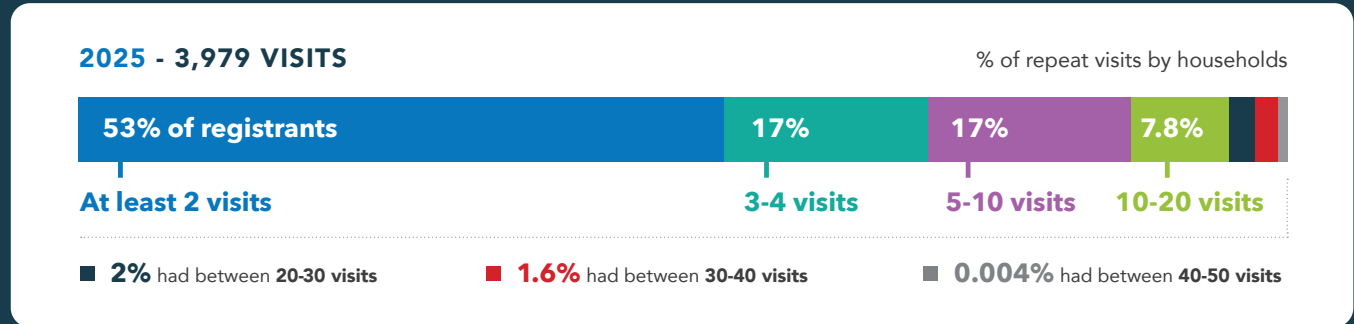


### WHY THIS MATTERS

Repeat visits indicate strong program quality and relevance

Families are building long-term relationships with the Science Center

Sustained engagement supports deeper learning, confidence, and curiosity over time



“ This is a wonderful place for kids to explore STEM!

“ My child really enjoyed the Math Magic area. It made math interesting as a child who often gets discouraged.

# Summer Camps

## A Summer of Exploration, Confidence, and STEM Growth

We partnered with STEAM & Dream Liberation Labs for the first time to cohost 4 new summer camps. STEAM & Dream brings the programs they normally teach in schools to life as summer camps at Homewood Science Center.



**114**  
Students

**AGES**  
5 - 14

**9** different  
camps

My kids have participated in several summer camps over the years, & have loved every second of it!





# Field Trips

## Supporting Educators Through Immersive STEM Learning

The Homewood Center team added new topics, encouraging repeat attendance by schools and groups. New topics include Habitat Adventure: Animals & Plants, Lights & Shadows: Exploring Physics & Art and The Power of Energy.

Our Field Trips this year saw an **increase of 13%** attendance

**27** districts

**70** schools and organizations

*Hands-on learning projects were very engaging, and students showed much more participation in this environment than they do at school. The kids really seemed to have a great time and learned a lot.*



Funded in part by Cook County's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

# Girls STEAM

## NEW in 2025 - Aesha Jackson STEAM Leader Award

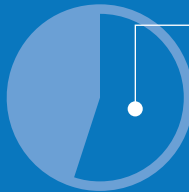
The Aesha Jackson STEAM Leader Award is dedicated to the memory of Aesha Jackson, a passionate engineer and advocate for young minds in STEM. As a young professional, Aesha dedicated time to mentoring and inspiring students, especially girls, to explore careers in STEM.

**127** students attending Title 1 schools

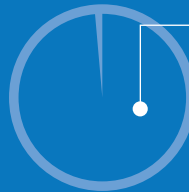
**35** professional women representing STEAM education & careers



**81%** say Girls STEAM helped them develop new education and career interests



**54.8%** say they see themselves pursuing a STEAM career in their future



**98.8%** say they feel confident about themselves after attending Girls STEAM Celebration



*I loved how interactive and hands-on the stations were. I loved the whole experience today.*

*I had a revelation of a career path that I have considered. Multiple medical staff presenters boosted my confidence.*

*I had an amazing time today, very inspiring and very motivated.*

# Conservation Ecology

## Middle School Internship

The program's demographic diversity remains a hallmark, with African American students comprising the largest group, followed by Caucasian, Hispanic/Latinx, and Mixed Ethnicity participants.

**43** interns from **5** school districts (& the homeschool community)

All responding families either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that their child shared what they learned about ecology or conservation at home



*My son has participated in several sessions over the last couple of years and each session he is excited to find out what the program topic will be, and which students will return.*

# Chicago Southland STEM Network

A platform for diverse stakeholders to collaborate on regional STEM education and workforce development

### SPRING 2025

**Scott Tillman-Franklin**, STEAM & Dream Liberation Labs

**Mission:** To close the STEM exposure gap and improve the futures of Black & Brown youth through mentorship and hands-on culturally affirming programming that fosters their STEM identities and empowers them to address real-world challenges with their imagination.

### FALL 2025

**Creative Placemaking Public Convening**

The proposed list of Creative Placemaking projects were discussed with the public.

Projects were designed to spark wonder and engage families through interactive science, technology, engineering, art, and math experiences.

# First Robotics/First Lego League

### FIRST TECH CHALLENGE TEAM

(7th-12 grade)

**Tech Ninja Team** celebrates 11 years!

**13 Students**

(60% growth from last year)

### FIRST LEGO LEAGUE

Two teams with 13 students

Both teams were awarded the **Rising All Star Award** at the regional tournament



# Donations

## INDIVIDUALS

## DONATION AMOUNT \$250 AND UP

Abby Reiner  
 Ann & Dale Mitchell  
 Ann & Nicholas Oehmen Foundation  
 Barbara Edwards  
 Brent & Maggie Bachus  
 Celeste & John Kralovec  
 Cindy & Rich Dobrez  
 Daria Terrell  
 Dave & Sue Riefe  
 David & Jennifer Dreyfuss  
 Dean Ferracane

Deb & Ray Walton  
 Debbie Berman  
 Deen Sokoya  
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 Jeff McClain  
 Jerome Dreyfuss Trust  
 John Yast  
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 Kathleen Orr

Kathy & Tom Blakemore  
 Kin Kong & Jim Grisus  
 Laura Murray  
 Lisa Cin  
 Mary Harrell  
 Michelle & Cameron Nelson  
 Pat Barker  
 Phil & Donna Milord  
 Ron Wexler  
 Stephanie & Rob Applebaum  
 Steve Dalessio  
 Willa R. Lee

## CORPORATE

Dober  
 Optiver US LLC  
 Enbridge Energy

The Weglarz Company  
 ComEd  
 Illinois Vehicle Auto Insurance

Morrison Container Handling Solutions  
 Bank Financial

## ORGANIZATIONS

Justinian Society of Lawyers  
 Flossmoor Service League  
 PMMI Education & Training Foundation

Suburban Service League  
 A Piece of Pie Donations  
 Day One Provisions & Events

Chicagoland Food Science Foundation

## GRANTS

Bosch Community Fund  
 Cook County's Community Development Block Grant

Cook County's Creative Placemaking Grant  
 NBCUniversal Local Impact Grant

Special thanks to the **Farley Family Charitable Foundation** & the **Village of Homewood**