

DCI INSIDER

FALL 2022 ISSUE



THE DISCOVERY CENTER OF IDAHO'S QUARTERLY IMPACT NEWSLETTER

HIGHLIGHTS:

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With summer drawing to a close and the start of a new school year, it seems fitting to devote this issue of DCI Insider to education. In the following pages, you will learn about some of the exciting new things happening within our Education Department. Most of you know that a field trip to the Discovery Center of Idaho is a time-honored tradition for students of all ages across Idaho, but we now have so much more to offer beyond our popular STEM Field Trips!

The Discovery Center is a vital resource for educators and lifelong learners, with enriching hands-on experiences and a library of digital resources to ignite curiosity. From camps and classes to “Hour with the Expert” sessions, On-Demand Educational Programs and a new STEAM Kit Lending Program, we have something for nearly everyone.

And that’s not all! In the following pages, you’ll learn about the Linking-in Program, an exciting new partnership with Boise State University, as well as our recently formed Education Advisory Council, a group of 15 school district leaders, local university faculty, representatives of underserved populations and STEM community members.

For more than 30 years, the mission of the Discovery Center has been to inspire lifelong interest and learning in STEM. With the launch of our Capital Campaign and exciting plans to renovate and expand the Center by 2026 well underway, we will continue to stimulate our visitors’ imaginations with open-ended exploration and inspire lifelong learning. Our renovations will prepare young Idahoans for possible futures in the ever-expanding STEM workforce for the next 30 years.

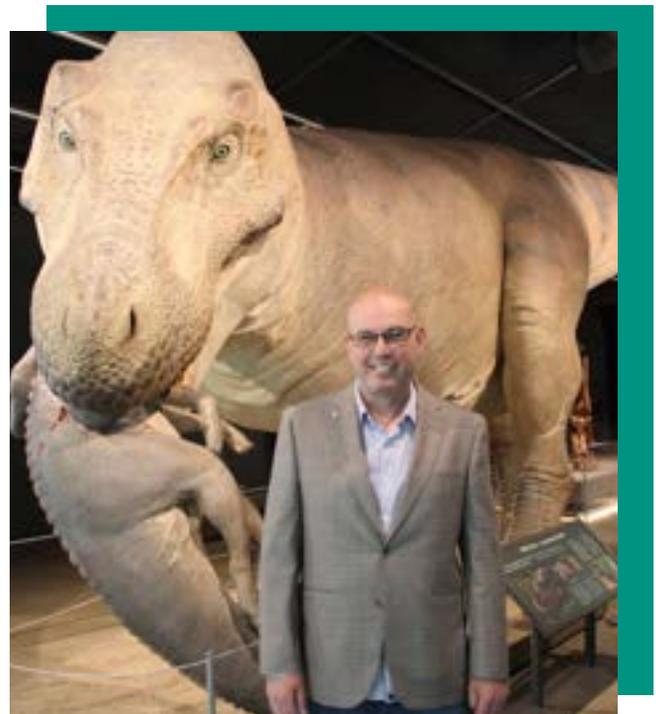
Sincerely,

Eric Miller

Executive Director



◀ Learn more about our Capital Campaign



A MESSAGE FROM AN EDUCATOR

“The Discovery Center is a magical place that brings us together and provides the “top shelf” learning experience where kids are having a blast while they’re learning loads.”

-Sarah Oosterhuis, Teacher, Renaissance High School

A NOTE FROM THE EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Education has been at the heart of the Discovery Center of Idaho since our inception in 1988 as a space to inspire lifelong learning and interest in science, technology, engineering and math. As our region has evolved, the Discovery Center has continued to adapt and create pathways towards a state-wide love for discovery and education.

Now, as we move forward into the next iteration of the Discovery Center with a vision towards an exciting new Capital Campaign, I'm thrilled to invite you to share in this journey as we fill our space with play, inspiration and joyful learning!

The programs described in the following pages support three key areas of institutional strategic growth:

- Enhance STEM Literacy & College and Career Readiness
- Increase Accessibility, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity
- Increase Sustainable Community Support

Each of our programs has been thoughtfully designed to reflect these key growth areas. We are a much smaller department than we were three years ago, but I am very proud of the quality and compassion of our tiny-but-mighty team.

We strive to amplify and promote our institution's mission and vision while sharing our passion for life and learning with visitors of all ages. This special issue of DCI Insider delves into the educational programs you know and love and lays out the steps we are taking to increase and deepen their impact. You will also learn about the ways in which we are reaching out to new audiences. These programs aim to cultivate a community of informed supporters who will be integral to the continued impact and success of the Discovery Center of Idaho.



Sincerely,
Emily Mahon
Education Director



◀ Learn about our education programs.

MEET THE EDUCATION TEAM



Emily Mahon

Education Director

For nearly 20 years, Emily has worked to advance museum and informal education. At the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana, CA she cultivated Artist-in-Residency programs in 88 school districts in LA County which impacted thousands of underserved students. Since joining the Discovery Center of Idaho in 2019, she has applied her experience to producing innovative, accessible and inclusive programming while also building a strong cohort of staff, educators and volunteers who inspire lifelong interest and learning in STEAM in our visitors.



Erin Seymour

Education Coordinator

Since graduating with a biology degree from Wartburg College in 2013, Erin has been working to mobilize learners of all ages and backgrounds to foster curiosity and connect with the natural world. Following two years of service with AmeriCorps and five years teaching middle school in a Title I district, Erin comes to the Discovery Center of Idaho as a strong proponent of the value and longitudinal impact of inquiry-based, hands-on educational experiences.



Sage Alexander

Volunteer Coordinator

After finishing her degrees at Idaho State University, Sage joined the Education Department with a passion to help further develop the Volunteer Program and make a positive impact on the community. You can often find Sage on the floor chatting with volunteers or in Young Learners spending time with the little ones! Her welcoming attitude and inclusive training has allowed the Volunteer Program to flourish as it broadens in size and diversity.

EDUCATION PROGRAM TESTIMONIAL

"Thank you so much for the engaging, interactive session! This was our group's favorite field trip thus far this summer. We truly had a blast, and I can't wait to bring more students in the future."

- Boise State University TRIO Program Educator

EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

In January 2022, we launched the Education Advisory Council; a group of 15 science, art and education professionals and key community stakeholders from around the state. Quarterly meetings offer a forum to discuss and provide expert feedback on educational content and development in the areas of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math). The council provides insight and support for the Discovery Center's use of cross-curricular strategies for community engagement, K-12 programming as well as developing access to educational resources in support of our mission.

This council will continue to be central to the work of the Education Department, and we expect it to expand organically as our needs and relationships grow and thrive.

The current members were recruited with an eye towards building pathways for sustainable community input. They support our strategic goals regarding access to educational programming for underserved communities, financial sustainability and growing diversity, equity and inclusion across the institution.

PARTNERSHIPS ESTABLISHED SO FAR IN 2022 INCLUDE:

- All 3rd and 4th grade students from Caldwell School District and a selection of Boise School District's 2nd grade classes will be visiting the Discovery Center to experience *SLIME!* in the fall of 2022.
- We are hosting a collaborative teacher professional development program in October with Boise State University and Idaho Art Educators Association along with the Alaska-based Fostering STEAM organization to help educators increase learner engagement and stimulate creativity through STEM and art.

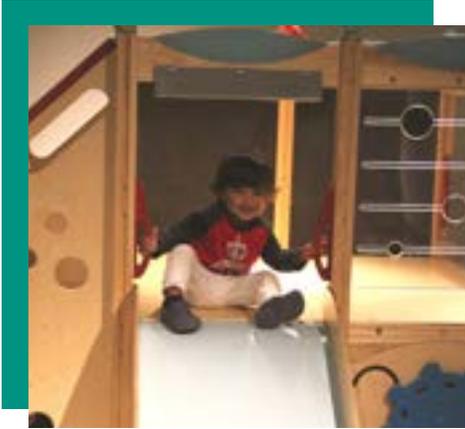


MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Elementary, middle and high school teachers
- School District representatives
- STEAM community members
- University representatives
- State/City/Municipality representatives
- Representatives of underserved populations

EDUCATION: FULL

ENHANCING STEM LITERACY & COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS



Young Discoverers

After recovering from a pandemic shutdown, we are happy to announce that our highly popular science-themed story and activity time for children aged 2 - 5 years is making a comeback this fall. This program is a wonderful chance for our youngest learners to explore basic STEAM concepts in a developmentally-appropriate way. This year we are partnering with local arts education provider, Abrakadoodle, to engage young ones in fun activities exploring topics that span the arts and sciences.

Field Trips

Increased field trip availability and the cultivation of district partnerships are extending the reach of the Discovery Center of Idaho. Students and chaperones get to interact with new and classic exhibitions for an immersive learning experience that they'll never forget! Teacher resources help set school groups up for success, and our experienced team of educators and volunteers are on hand to encourage exploration, inquiry and collaboration. Classroom activities and take-home activity kits are available to school groups to further supplement the learning experience.



School Break Camps

Always popular, our school break camps provide a unique, informal classroom setting where students can fall in love with STEAM through engaging hands-on activities and access to our amazing exhibitions and permanent exhibits. These programs offer a fun way to keep students' brains active and learning even when school is out of session. Camps take place during every major school break and serve students from 1st grade through 6th grade.



STEAM AHEAD



Linking-in Program

To make college and university partnerships easier to navigate, we created a menu of internships and volunteer opportunities that are specifically geared to support our changing organizational needs and the learning needs of college and university students of various levels.

Opportunities range from exhibit translation, fabrication and maintenance, to general floor volunteering and more!

Learn more about our Linking-in Program >>



LINKING-IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

During the 2022 fall semester, upper-level Spanish students from the Boise State University Department of World Languages will provide Spanish written and audio translations of signage and educational resources related to our *TINKER THE T-REX* exhibition. Our intent with this partnership is to continue semester-by-semester, providing Spanish translations for all of the exhibits in our permanent collection. See more about this program in "Exhibit Translation" on page 8.

Teacher Professional Development

An excellent way to guarantee exponential impact from STEM education is by investing in teacher professional development. Supported by a grant from ASML, we will be offering a special one-day program called "SLIME! and STEM" geared toward supporting teachers as they incorporate STEM into their curriculum and helping them better utilize our resources and galleries as teaching tools for the classroom.

Additionally, in partnership with Idaho Arts Educators Association, Boise State University and Fostering STEAM, there will be a two-day, fully immersive workshop held at the Discovery Center of Idaho. This unique opportunity will provide strategies for educators wishing to maximize student participation in STEM and the arts .

By continuing to build capacity through teacher education, we hope to see a farther reaching, more sustainable and consistent impact on Idaho students and families. Investing in teachers will not only cultivate greater STEAM literacy throughout the community, but will also increase the level of engagement in Discovery Center of Idaho visitors.

A promotional poster for a teacher professional development program. The background is dark grey. At the top right, a bright green slime drip is shown. The text 'SLIME! & STEM' is written in large, bold, bright green letters. Below this, 'Teacher Professional Development' is written in white, and 'October 1st, 2022' is in bright green. A QR code is located on the left side, with the text 'Register today!' to its right. At the bottom right, the Discovery Center of Idaho logo is displayed, featuring a stylized 'D' and the text 'DISCOVERY Center of Idaho'. At the bottom, there is a bright green slime puddle.

INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

On-Demand Educational Programs

On-Demand Educational Programs offer the benefits of a field trip from the comfort of the classroom or even your living room! Choose from a wide range of STEAM topics that integrate standards-aligned instruction via virtual demonstrations, free YouTube videos and live Zoom lessons. Hands-on activity kits are also available. Educator resource guides provide users with background knowledge and suggestions to optimize implementation.



By creating and sharing content through the internet and partnering with global online educational platforms, such as Varsity Tutors, A Nerdy Company, LLC, we were able to reach thousands of learners of all ages worldwide.

2022 COURSES:

- Science Centers 101
- The Discovery Center Presents: *SLIME!*



◀ See our website for more courses!

STEAM Kit Lending Program

Classrooms and families can easily facilitate hands-on learning activities using our extensive lending library of STEAM Kits. These comprehensive packages are designed to promote project-based learning in earth and space science, chemistry, physics and engineering, while also supporting literacy and creativity.



◀ Request a kit today!



Exhibit Translation

We are continuing a partnership with Boise State University (BSU) Department of World Languages. The Spanish team will begin translating all of our exhibits into Spanish, both in written form and audio, to provide access to a more diverse audience, non-reading audiences and those with visual impairments. We piloted this partnership in the spring of 2022 with the French team at BSU and are able to offer access to all of our exhibits to our French-speaking and reading audiences as needed.

View French exhibit translations. >>



In the spring of 2022, we worked closely with Deanna Stubbs, a local American Sign Language (ASL) translator, to create an ASL translation video that we embedded into our "Tinkering with Tinker" video. This provides additional access to STEAM learning and literacy to hard-of-hearing students. This video is available for free on our Discovery Center of Idaho YouTube channel.



<< View "ASL - Tinkering with Tinker" video.

Homeschool Days

New this year at the Discovery Center of Idaho are our monthly Homeschool Days. First Fridays will be set aside specifically for homeschool groups, granting these students and families exclusive access to the field trip experience at a discounted rate. Take-home activity kits will be available to continue the learning process at home!



Reserve your spot today! >>



INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERS

INCREASE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Volunteer Program

Our volunteers are the heart of the Discovery Center! Since 2020, our Volunteer Program has grown from 10-15 regular volunteers to a crowd of 71, facilitating learning on the gallery floor during field trips, engaging children in STEAM activities during school break camps, supporting our fabrication team in the workshop and acting as our community ambassadors. By expanding the scope of our Volunteer Program, we aim to better represent and serve the Treasure Valley.



PROGRAM GOALS INCLUDE:

Diversify volunteer recruitment to reflect the diversity of the Treasure Valley

Involve volunteers in our Education Advisory Council to provide insight into programmatic development

Expand volunteering opportunities and access to lifelong learning resources

Retain by valuing, recognizing, appreciating, rewarding and celebrating



Boise Soul Food Festival
August 13, 2022

SUMMER 2022 OUTREACH EVENTS

As we continue to reformulate our educational programming in response to the global pandemic, we were so excited to dive back into community outreach this summer!

Our two outreach events allowed us to connect with over 800 kids and families with fun STEAM activities and resources.



Western Idaho Fair
August 19, 2022

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

FLOOR EDUCATION VOLUNTEER

Enhance guest experience and explore discovery as a Floor Education Volunteer. Answering questions and encouraging learning helps guests enjoy the Discovery Center of Idaho. Volunteers are also responsible for helping the center look its best with simple maintenance and procedures to keep everything running smoothly.



FIELD TRIP VOLUNTEER

Field Trip Volunteers work with staff to provide on-the-floor support and knowledge along with hands-on activities. These volunteers have a specific interest in growing skills in the classroom or in educational settings.



EVENT VOLUNTEER

We occasionally have events that take place after business hours, such as Member Mondays or Adult Nights! Event Volunteers assist in setting up and facilitating special events which can span from 2-6 hours long.



CAMP VOLUNTEER

School breaks are a chance to get involved with camps. Camp Volunteers work with students to help them engage with hands-on activities and unique STEAM learning experiences they'll never forget!



OUTREACH VOLUNTEER

Outreach Volunteers support our mission by providing the Treasure Valley community access to resources and hands-on learning outside of the walls of the Discovery Center of Idaho.

Learn more about our volunteer opportunities and join our team today!



GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY



Abrakadoodle

Boise Museum Association

Boise School District

Boise State University

Caldwell School District

Idaho Art Education Association

Idaho Business for Education

Idaho Department of Education

Idaho Digital Learning Alliance

The Keith and Catherine Stein Luminary at BSU

Soul Food Festival

Varsity Tutors

West Ada School District



WITH SUPPORT FROM



**OPENING
SEPTEMBER 26TH**