# newscience

NEWS FOR MEMBERS, PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS, AND FRIENDS OF THE SAINT LOUIS SCIENCE CENTER

WINTER 2026–2027



## Learning Through Play

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# Letter from the President

Dear Friends of the Saint Louis Science Center,

Each day, our doors open to anyone, of any age, who has the desire to discover something new. Our Science Center is a place to be immersed in science, whether it's learning through play, finding out a new fact from someone working in the sciences, or being transported to see the wonders of our universe. From little learners to lifelong discovery-seekers, guests at our Science Center always have something new to explore.

In this Winter issue of *NewScience*, we are excited to share a look at many of the upcoming experiences that will spark wonder in our guests.

Learn about recent updates to the Discovery Room, featuring more sessions, faster transition times between sessions, and additional sensory-friendly offerings on Sundays. Find out more on our newest OMNIMAX® Theater documentary film, *Sea Otters: A Wild Family Adventure*, as well as special programs and opportunities for school groups, whether they are visiting the Science Center or learning in their own classroom.

But perhaps most thrilling is our upcoming special exhibition, *Death by Natural Causes*, which will make its U.S. tour premiere at our Science Center in March 2027. The exhibition explores the surprising ways the natural world can be beautiful, fascinating, and dangerous. Visit page 14 to learn more.

To make these experiences possible, it takes committed friends and supporters who empower our Science Center. I encourage you to visit page 28 to view the generosity on display at Club WONDER: Light Years Ahead, where we raised $400,000 to support our year-round work. In our Donor Spotlight, meet longtime supporters Grenville and Dianne Sutcliffe, owners and operators of Husky Corporation, a Missouri-based global provider of fuel-dispensing products and services. You will also find a sneak peek at the exciting events in store for our Einstein Society members in 2027.

In this season of gratitude and generosity, thank you for being a friend of the Science Center. If you would like to help make an added impact, visit page 16 to learn about how gifts to our Curiosity Fund can help the Science Center reach farther and serve even more members of our community.

Whether you are a member, donor, corporate partner, or an advocate for our mission, your support matters. You help keep doors open to discovery for everyone, and I encourage you to step inside your Science Center to see the wonder you make possible—and make a discovery of your own.



With gratitude,

Ray Vandiver
President and CEO

***To inspire everyone to be curious and engaged in science.***
Mission of the Saint Louis Science Center

### Contact
314.289.4400 | ***slsc.org***
Saint Louis Science Center
5050 Oakland Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63110

### Membership
Services, Sales & Member Reservations: 314.289.4414
***slsc.org/membership***
***memberships@slsc.org***

### Reservations
Advance Sales & Group Reservations: 314.289.4424

### Education
Programming information:
***education@slsc.org***


### Events
Host your next private event at the Saint Louis Science Center. Services and catering provided by Saint Louis Science Center Events. For information: 314.286.4667.

### Accessibility
Complimentary wheelchairs and strollers are available in the lobby. Motorized scooters are available for a rental fee. Personal Hearing Assistance Devices are available at the OMNIMAX® Theater and Planetarium. Captiview caption devices are available for all OMNIMAX® films.

### Official Partners
The Saint Louis Science Center gratefully acknowledges the support of our Official Partners.

Connect with us for updates, special events, and fun science.



# In This Issue...


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Featuring the Discovery Room, now with more opportunities for little scientists to enjoy age-appropriate learning through play.

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**24** **Partnership & Support**
Meet the Sutcliffes and learn about Husky Corporation; learn about our recent Club WONDER: Light Years Ahead event, and join us in remembering Dr. Becky Thompson, who led our Science and Education team until her recent passing.

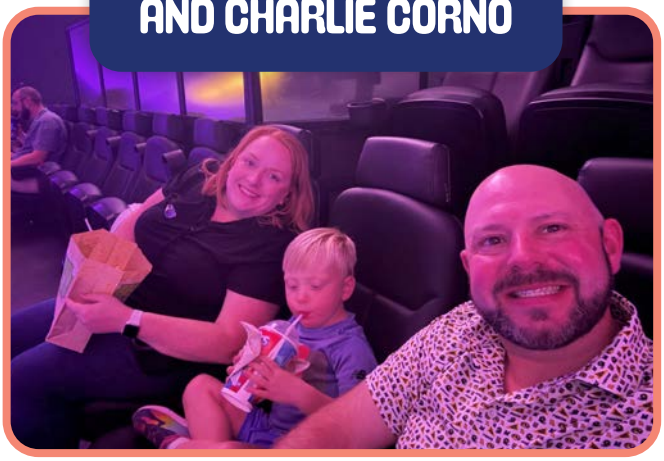

**WINTER HOURS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Wednesday | 9:30am-4:30pm |
| Thursday | 9:30am-4:30pm |
| Friday | 9:30am-4:30pm |
| Saturday | 9:30am-4:30pm |
| Sunday | 11:00am-4:30pm |
| Monday | 9:30am-4:30pm |
| Tuesday | Closed |

For the most current version of our schedule, please visit ***slsc.org***.

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## EDWARD, ALLISON, AND CHARLIE CORNO



**How long have you been members?**

This is our second year as Science Center members, and it has quickly become one of our favorite places to visit as a family.




**How old is your son, and what does he like best about the Science Center?**

Our son, Charlie, is 5 years old. He absolutely loves the OMNIMAX® Theater and the GROW Gallery and Pavilion. He is also really excited to check out the new McDonnell Planetarium!

**How do you hope that this membership will fuel your son's interest in learning?**

One of the biggest reasons we love our membership is the opportunity to expose Charlie to new things he might not otherwise experience. Whether it's dinosaur bones, agriculture, construction, space, or something completely new, the Science Center gives him a chance to explore subjects that he may not normally encounter every day. While he is at this age, we want learning to feel exciting and fun for him, and the Science Center does a great job of sparking that curiosity.

**"EVERY VISIT CAN BE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE, AND YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT MIGHT SPARK A NEW INTEREST OR PASSION IN YOUR CHILD."**

**What types of member events do you enjoy attending the most?**

We love the OMNIMAX movies! Getting the opportunity to see a sneak peek before a movie is released to the public is such a fun and unique experience for our family.



**Why would you recommend a membership to anyone considering one?**

I would recommend a membership because it provides constant opportunities to expose your child to things they might not normally experience. Having a safe, educational, and fun space where your child can explore, ask questions, learn, and grow is incredibly valuable. Every visit can be a completely different experience, and you never know what might spark a new interest or passion in your child.

# UPCOMING MEMBER EVENTS

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10 | 5:00–8:00PM**

## Member Appreciation Night

**Tickets available now!**

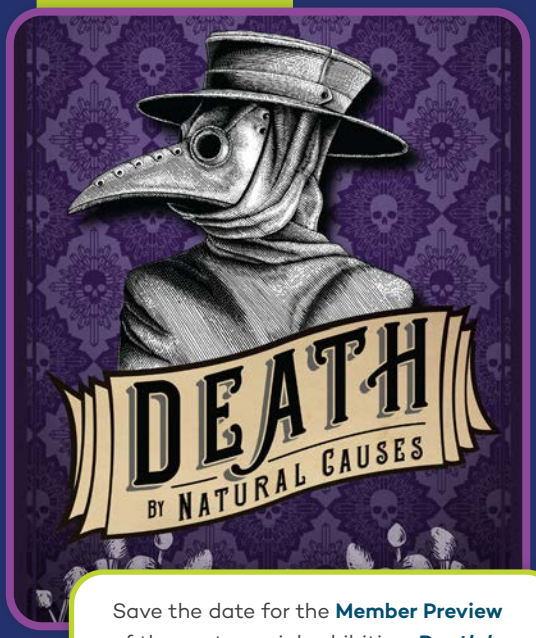
Join us for a members-only night at the museum! We'll be previewing our next OMNIMAX® documentary, *Sea Otters: A Wild Family Adventure*, as well as offering lots of special activities focusing on wild animals for all age groups, and offering **20% OFF** in the gift shop and discounts at the café. Don't miss the hot chocolate bar!

**THURSDAY, MARCH 4**

## Member Appreciation Night & Member Preview

Mark your calendars for our spring Member Appreciation Night on March 4, featuring the OMNIMAX® Member Preview of *Einstein's Incredible Universe*.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 19**




Save the date for the **Member Preview** of the next special exhibition, ***Death by Natural Causes***, on Friday, March 19! Go to **page 14** to learn more.

# Toys that Teach

## 2026 Gift Guide

**Members receive 20% OFF gift shop purchases during Member Appreciation Night.**

Members always receive 10% off in our gift shops, but during **Member Appreciation Night, December 10**, take 20% off and knock some gifts off your holiday shopping list!




### ENGINEERING

**Keva Brain Builders Junior**
$15 ($13.50 for members)




**Lego 3-in-1 Space Shuttle**
$20 ($18 for members)




### PALEONTOLOGY

**Dino Skull**
$29 ($26.10 for members)

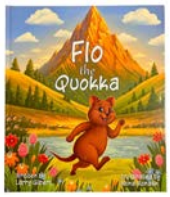



**National Geographic Glow in the Dark T. rex Dissection Lab**
$40 ($36 for members)

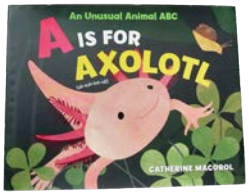
### ANIMALS



**Quokka Plushie**
$16 ($14.40 for members)




***Flo the Quokka***
**by Larry Gilbert**
$19.99 ($18 for members)

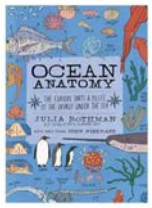



***A is for Axolotl:***
***An Unusual Animal ABC***
**by Catherine Macorol**
$19.99 ($18 for members)

## MARINE BIOLOGY



**Brown Toy Box Dadisi Academy Oscar/Marine Biology STEAM Kit**
$40 ($36 for members)




***Ocean Anatomy: The Curious Parts and Pieces of The World Under the Sea*** **by Julia Rothman**
$18.99 ($17.10 for members)

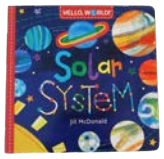
## SPACE EXPLORATION



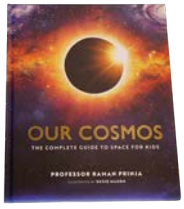

**National Geographic Outer Space Dig Kit**
$30 ($27 for members)




**Daron Space Capsule Playset**
$38 ($34.20 for members)




***Hello, World! Solar System*** **by Jill McDonald**
$8.99 ($8.10 for members)




***Our Cosmos: The Complete Guide to Space for Kids*** **by Professor Raman Prinja**
$24.95 ($21.46 for members)

## CURIOSITY

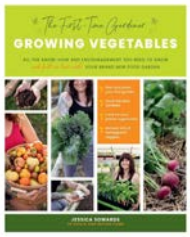


**Membership makes a great gift for curious minds of any age!**
Visit ***slsc.org/membership*** to learn more.




***Mind Blown: The Ultimate Science Book for Curious Kids*** **by Shane Carley**
$15 ($13.50 for members)

## AGRICULTURE




***The First-Time Gardener: Growing Vegetables*** **by Jessica Sowards**
$26.99 ($24.30 for members)

## CHEMISTRY



**Genius Play Luminescent Lab Glow Science Chemistry**
$34 ($31.60 for members)

## ROBOTICS




**Solar Flower STEM Kit**
$40 ($36 for members)

# SCIENCE AT PLAY

## WITH JAMIE HEIMOS

Licensed Professional Counselor
& Registered Play Therapist




@JAMIEHEIMOSLPC

*When people hear the words "therapist's office," they might picture a big cozy chair, a coffee in hand, a cardigan, and a whole lot of nodding. My office looks a little different. There are toys. Lots of them. There are art supplies, games, sand, dolls, and usually at least three Lego creations. Because I'm a play therapist, and for the kids I work with, play is often the language that makes the most sense. I spend a lot of time sitting on the floor, coloring, or playing games.*

As a Registered Play Therapist, I help kids work through big feelings, anxiety, and other challenges by using play, talking, and activities that help them understand themselves and feel better. For kids, play isn't just something they do for fun. It's one of the ways they communicate, process experiences, practice skills, and make sense of their world.

My career began with play at its foundation, and play has been at the heart of my work for decades. During high school, I worked at a children's museum, where I saw firsthand how much children can learn, explore, and connect through play.

I began my professional career as a child life specialist, using play to help children make sense of and cope with the hospital environment. I became passionate about working with children experiencing behavioral health concerns, which led me to pursue my graduate degree in counseling.

In my office, I help kids use toys, art materials, and other playful ways to help them make sense of hard situations in their lives. Where one child who experienced a fall may act out the injury, care, and doctor visit after the fact, another child may choose to communicate their worry about the fall through expressive materials or toys. Kids don't simply say, "That made me worry about getting more boo-boos." Instead, they play through their emotions.

If a child is working through social concerns like getting along with a friend, we may play a game of UNO. On the surface, we are just playing a card game. But as a play therapist, I'm paying attention to what happens underneath the game.

Games naturally create opportunities to practice flexible thinking and problem solving. A child may have a plan for their turn, only to draw a card that changes what they can play. These moments give me the opportunity to see skills in action, including emotional regulation, flexibility, frustration tolerance, perspective taking, and problem solving, all happening in real time. There are many ways play can become a meaningful tool for children to explore emotions, practice social skills, build confidence, and develop skills they need outside the therapy space. We aren't just talking about the skills; I'm watching and giving kids opportunities to practice them in a safe space.




The same idea applies to a child playing with Lego blocks or a dollhouse. A child might use characters to act out different scenarios like sibling conflict or a challenge at school. As they play, I learn about how they understand the world, whether they understand outside perspectives or if they take charge of play, all without requiring kids to sit on a couch and talk directly about the experience.

As grown-ups, we often consider play to be silly or unimportant. It keeps our kids occupied when we are rushing around trying to get dinner on the table or take a shower in peace. But play isn't a way to pass the time. Play is serious learning.

When children play, they are actively making sense of the world around them. They are building neural connections and practicing skills that support healthy attachment, language development, problem solving, emotional regulation, communication, and social relationships. Play gives children a safe space to practice being human.

I recently visited the Science Center's Discovery Room with my two kids and two of their friends. This outing reminded me how much learning happens through something that looks on the surface like "just playing."

My one-year-old son was enamored with the water table. What adults might see as splashing and making a mess was actually a lesson in curiosity, cause and effect, experimentation, and problem solving. He poured, splashed, watched what happened, and tried again.

Meanwhile, my four-year-old daughter and her five-year-old friend were negotiating who got to use the rocket ship's microphone first. They were practicing sharing, taking turns, communicating their wants, and navigating the very real emotions that come with waiting your turn.

## "PLAY IS A NECESSITY FOR ALL OF US."

That is the science of play I find so exciting to watch. Children do not need to sit down for a lesson to learn. They learn by doing, exploring, pretending, experimenting, connecting, and trying again and again.

When we give our children a chance to play, it is an opportunity to add another tool to their toolbox. Those tools—how to solve a problem, communicate a need, manage frustration, connect with other people, or approach something unfamiliar—are skills they will carry beyond the playroom and into the real world.

That is why I'm such a believer in giving children plenty of opportunities for open-ended, hands-on play with other people and with actual toys. When we make room for play, we make time for learning, and we give children one of the most natural and powerful ways to learn.

Play isn't something kids need to "get out of their system" so they can grow up. Play is a part of how we grow. Play is not a luxury. It is not wasted time. And it certainly is not something we do when the real learning is finished. Play is a necessity for all of us.

### STEM EXPERT SPOTLIGHT

**Jamie Heimos** is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Registered Play Therapist (RPT™), and the owner of Balance and Bloom Counseling in Wildwood, MO. She received a BS in Child & Family Development from Missouri State University and a Master of Education specializing in Counseling from UMSL. Jamie is also a children's book author, with her debut book *Rosie and the Dream Fairy* published in October 2025 and more on the way. Her work is deeply rooted in her own childhood experience navigating an undiagnosed anxiety disorder, which continues to shape her compassionate, relatable approach with families. She supports parents in building intentional, playful connections with their children, helping them feel more confident, connected, and grounded in their parenting.




GALLERY SPOTLIGHT



**The Discovery Room is one of our most popular experiences for young children, with sessions often selling out quickly.**

That demand tells us something important: families are looking for more opportunities to give their young scientists hands-on experiences designed just for them. We've heard from many of you that you want more opportunities to experience the Discovery Room—and we're listening.

## More Discovery Room Opportunities!

Because the Discovery Room is so popular, we're making changes to give more families the opportunity to experience it.

**More Sessions:**
We've added additional Discovery Room sessions to the schedule, creating more opportunities throughout the day for young scientists to participate.

**50-Minute Sessions:**
Sessions will now be 50 minutes long, giving children plenty of time to explore, experiment, and engage.

**Only 10 Minutes Between Sessions:**
We're shortening the transition time between sessions to just 10 minutes, allowing for more opportunities throughout the day.

**Sensory-Friendly Sundays:**
On Sundays, we'll offer two Discovery Room sessions as part of our Sensory-Friendly Sunday programming. These sessions will feature a smaller capacity, creating a more comfortable and accessible experience for young scientists who benefit from a quieter, less crowded environment.

**Together, these changes allow more young scientists to experience the Discovery Room each day while maintaining the hands-on, engaging experience families love.**

### We're Still Learning, Too.

As we expand the Discovery Room's offerings, we're continuing to learn what works best for our youngest visitors and their families. We'll continue to listen to guest feedback, look at participation and attendance, and make adjustments as we learn more.

Our goal is simple: to make the Discovery Room an engaging, welcoming experience where young children can explore, experiment, and discover science in ways that feel meaningful to them.

# 2027 SUMMER STEM EXPLORERS

## All members have access to early registration!

Members at the **Family & Friends level or above** receive a discount.











### A Look Back at Our 2026 Summer STEM Explorers

Electrons, neutrons, protons, and quarks aren't just subatomic particles… they're also the names of our Summer Camp groups! Available to young STEM learners from 5-9 years of age, during each session of the 2026 season, campers spent a week learning about various science subjects, including engineering and dinosaurs!

In June or July, you could find our campers enjoying age-appropriate deep dives into all kinds of science, whether they were in our galleries or in special classrooms with our friendly camp counselors. These lucky campers got to see a side of the Science Center that's hard to capture in a normal visit!

**Hoping to book similar opportunities for your little scientist?**

Camp reservations will go on sale early in 2027 and sell out fast, so stay tuned for email updates—and don't forget to take advantage of the member presale!

THIS WINTER AT THE

# James S. McDonnell Planetarium

## Public Telescope Viewing Dates

### Star Parties

EVENING TELESCOPE VIEWING

Friday, December 4, 5:30-8:30pm
Friday, February 5, 5:30-8:30pm

### Solar Sundays

DAYTIME SOLAR TELESCOPE VIEWING

Sunday, December 20, 11:00am-3:00pm
Sunday, January 17, 11:00am-3:00pm
Sunday, February 21, 11:00am-3:00pm

Please note that all telescope viewing dates are weather dependent and visit slsc.org for updates.

## Yoga Under the Stars

Monday, December 21, 7:00pm
Monday, January 25, 7:00pm
Monday, February 22, 7:00pm

## Rock in the New Year with Laser Shows in the McDonnell Planetarium!

Visit ***slsc.org/lasers*** for tickets and more information.

## McDonnell Planetarium Shows



COMING SOON

***Cosmic Lenses: Nancy Grace Roman and the Next Great Observatory***

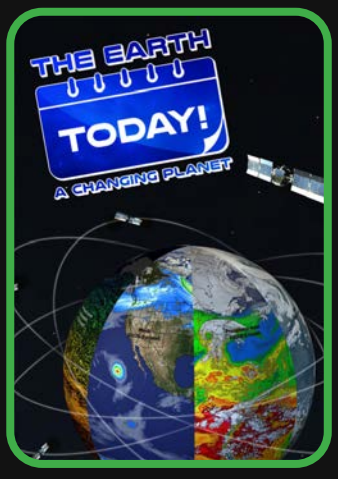
The Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope is scheduled to send its first images back to Earth in early 2027. **Join us for this new live Planetarium Show to explore the depths of the Universe through our newest cosmic lens!**

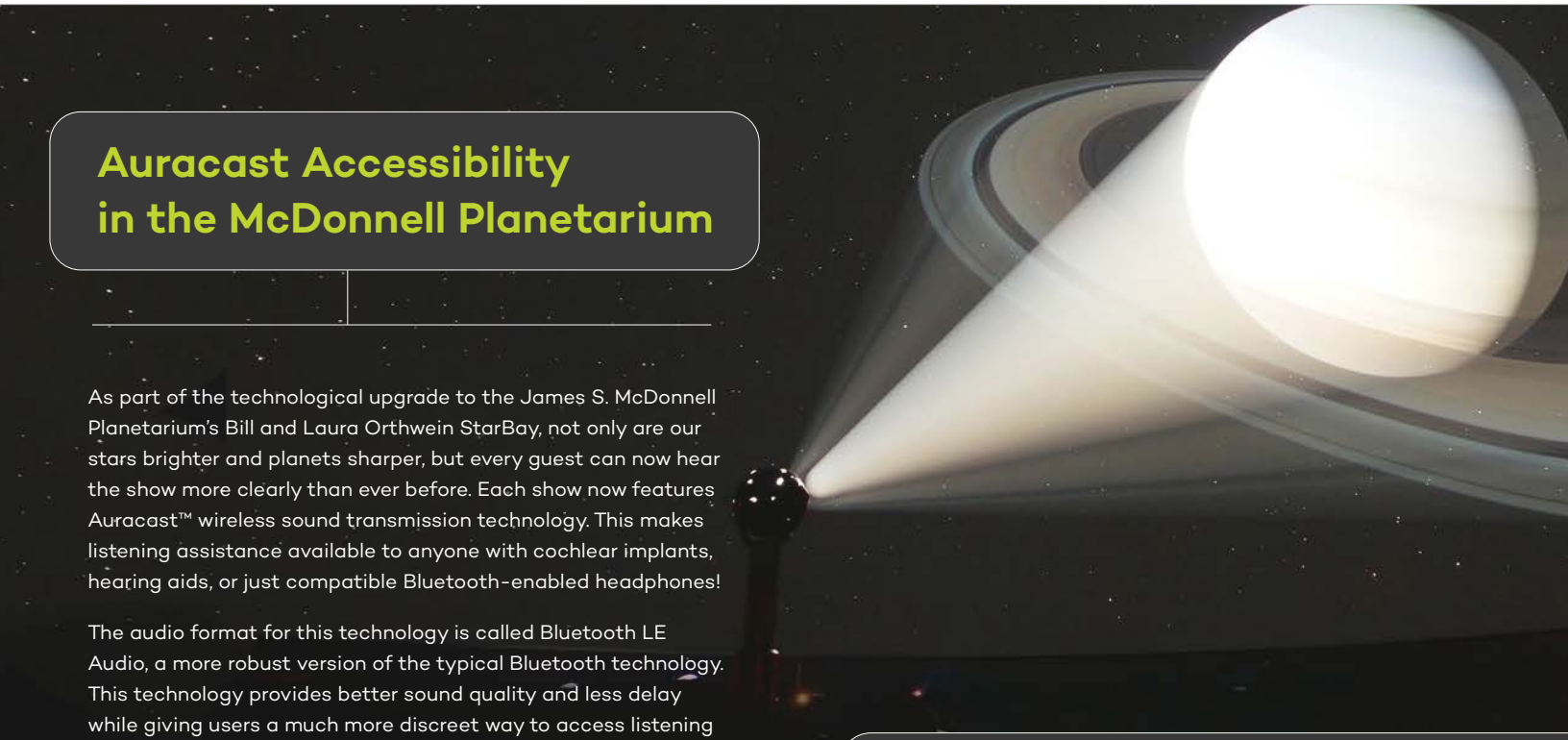










# Auracast Accessibility in the McDonnell Planetarium

As part of the technological upgrade to the James S. McDonnell Planetarium's Bill and Laura Orthwein StarBay, not only are our stars brighter and planets sharper, but every guest can now hear the show more clearly than ever before. Each show now features Auracast™ wireless sound transmission technology. This makes listening assistance available to anyone with cochlear implants, hearing aids, or just compatible Bluetooth-enabled headphones!

The audio format for this technology is called Bluetooth LE Audio, a more robust version of the typical Bluetooth technology. This technology provides better sound quality and less delay while giving users a much more discreet way to access listening assistance. And it's as easy to use as joining a wi-fi network!

One of the best features of this technology is that it provides convenient aid to guests who may not traditionally seek out hearing assistance. Guests don't need hearing aids or cochlear implants to take advantage of having their own personal audio feed. The option for guests to choose between hearing all audio in the theater or hearing only the narrator without any ambient distractions can help all types of guests and learners.

The system was designed and installed by Gary Koester, founder of Sense Art Solutions, who has a personal mission to help those with hearing loss inspired by difficulties his father faced.

Koester notes, "Auracast is more than the future of assisted listening—it is an accessible platform available today. By bringing high-quality audio directly to those who need it, the Saint Louis Science Center is making the Planetarium's audio experience available to every guest."

The Saint Louis Science Center is pleased to be one of the first planetariums featuring Auracast. Please ask any Planetarium team members for more information or for further instructions on how to connect to the Auracast system during your next visit!

AURACAST™
A BLUETOOTH® TECHNOLOGY

To find other venues with similar accessibility options, please visit ***www.aldlocator.com***.

## Winter Astronomy Dates

DECEMBER 13–14, 2026

### Geminid Meteor Shower Peak

The annual Geminid meteor shower will peak on the morning of December 14. In 2026, the near first-quarter moon will set early, allowing for dark viewing conditions after midnight.

JANUARY 3, 2027

### Venus at Greatest Western Elongation

As you ring in the New Year, Venus will shine brightly as the "Morning Star" in the East before sunrise. At greatest elongation, Venus will be near its peak altitude for this apparition of 35° above the horizon.

FEBRUARY 6, 2027

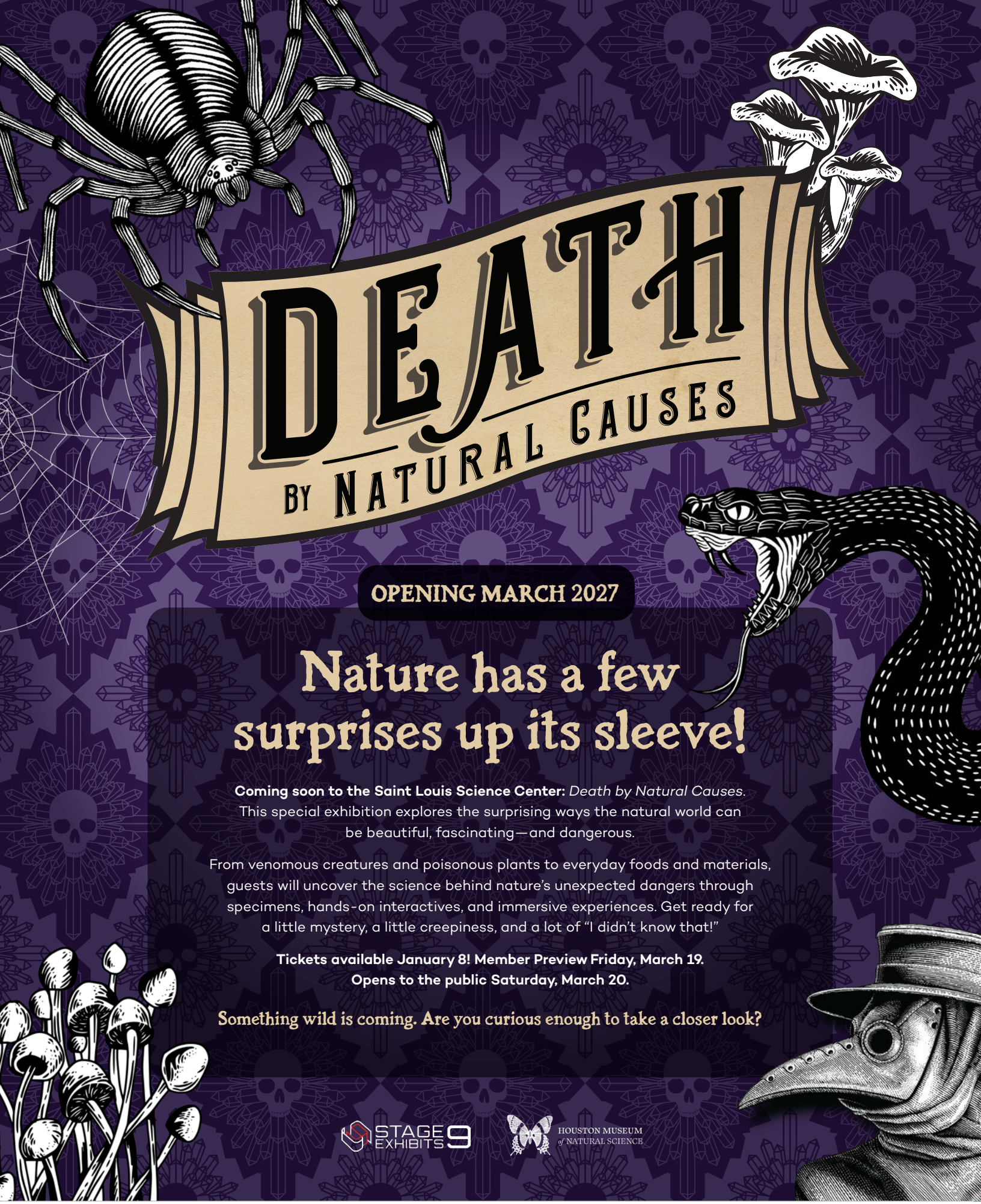
### Lunar New Year

Millions of people around the world will celebrate the start of a new lunisolar year on February 6. Lunar New Year usually occurs on the second new moon following the winter solstice. In the Chinese Zodiac, this begins the Year of the Goat.

FEBRUARY 10 & 19, 2027:

### Jupiter and Mars at Opposition

February 2027 offers a unique "double opposition" with Jupiter and Mars reaching their peak brightness for the year. Both Jupiter and Mars will shine in the East after sunset and will be visible in the sky all night long for the entire month.




OPENING MARCH 2027

# Nature has a few surprises up its sleeve!

**Coming soon to the Saint Louis Science Center:** *Death by Natural Causes.* This special exhibition explores the surprising ways the natural world can be beautiful, fascinating—and dangerous.

From venomous creatures and poisonous plants to everyday foods and materials, guests will uncover the science behind nature's unexpected dangers through specimens, hands-on interactives, and immersive experiences. Get ready for a little mystery, a little creepiness, and a lot of "I didn't know that!"

**Tickets available January 8! Member Preview Friday, March 19.**
**Opens to the public Saturday, March 20.**

Something wild is coming. Are you curious enough to take a closer look?

STAGE EXHIBITS 9

HOUSTON MUSEUM of NATURAL SCIENCE

# VR SAFARI

## New in Our Simulators!

Get closer to African wildlife than is possible even on a real safari through Pulseworks' exciting 360-Live VR Safari motion experience. Come face to face with diverse and amazing animals such as elephants, leopards, and gorillas, and learn how preserving their habitats impacts life across the globe!

**Members receive discounted tickets for our simulators.**

## The Science Center is the perfect place to bring your group.

When you bring at least ten people to the Saint Louis Science Center, you save on featured experiences like OMNIMAX® Theater films, McDonnell Planetarium Shows, special exhibitions, and so much more.

From schools and youth organizations to senior and tour groups, there's a light bulb moment waiting for everyone.

### So why wait?

Visit ***slsc.org/groups*** or contact Group Sales at 314.289.4424 to create your group experience!

**FINAL WEEKS | Don't miss it!**




# BLUE WHALE

THE EXHIBITION

**Closes January 10**

# Dream. Discover. Connect.

JANUARY 16 | 9:30AM–4:30PM
JANUARY 17 | 11:00AM–4:30PM

**Honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with us as the Science Center celebrates his vision of a more just and connected world with special touches throughout our daily programming.** On Saturday, experience hands-on science alongside community organizations and STEM role models. All weekend, add your voice to our community reflection wall and share your dream for the future, because science belongs to all of us, and every voice strengthens it. Free and open to all, just as Dr. King envisioned.

# Your Generosity Makes Curiosity Possible.



## Spark wonder for our community with a gift to the Curiosity Fund.

### Empower the Saint Louis Science Center to immerse our community in the wonder of science.

By making a gift to the Curiosity Fund, you connect people of all ages to STEM through hands-on activities and education programs; you bring the latest in STEM to our community through free public events like SciFest; and you sustain the day-to-day operations that make every moment of wonder possible.

Working alongside public support, memberships, corporate partnerships, and more, the Curiosity Fund gives the Science Center the financial stability and flexibility to bring the wonder of science to life each day without barriers to access. **But free access to science is not guaranteed—it's sustained by those who believe that curiosity should belong to everyone.**

*The Curiosity Fund is the Science Center's general operating fund, sustaining the galleries and programs, community events, team members, and daily moments of wonder that **inspire more than 600,000 people** each year.*






## Ways to Support

**Online** | Visit *slsc.org/ns-winter26* or scan the QR code.

**Phone** | Call us at 314-289-4414.

**Mail** | Use the reply envelope enclosed for your convenience.



## SciFest Events are Making Science Personal

The Science Center's free SciFest events connect people of all ages with the latest in St. Louis innovation alongside STEM organizations and professionals.

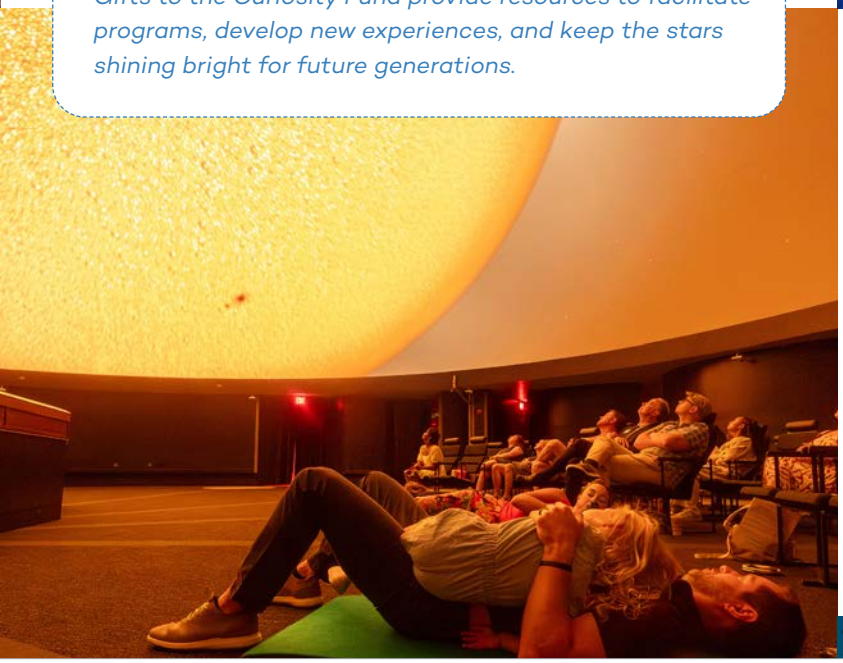
*Support for the Curiosity Fund has helped us welcome **more than 12,300 people** to connect with **more than 500 on-site STEM professionals** by providing the resources to plan and deliver these museum-wide events where everyone can immerse themselves in the wonder of science.*



## The McDonnell Planetarium is Inviting St. Louis to Witness a Universe of Wonder

The James S. McDonnell Planetarium's Orthwein StarBay reopened this summer as the most advanced hybrid planetarium in the country with cutting-edge, next-generation projection technology, more immersive audio, enhanced accessibility options, and more.

*Gifts to the Curiosity Fund provide resources to facilitate programs, develop new experiences, and keep the stars shining bright for future generations.*



## Wednesdays at the Science Center are Giving More Opportunities for Discovery

This summer, the Science Center added a sixth day to our operating calendar, giving our community an additional chance each week to explore our galleries, engage in STEM programs, and discover how science impacts our daily lives.

*Donations to the Curiosity Fund support the Science Center's free general admission and daily operation, helping us welcome **more than 30,000 people** on this year's Wednesday operating days alone.*


Opens January 15
FILMED ON THE WILD WEST COAST OF
VANCOUVER ISLAND
SEA OTTERS
A WILD FAMILY ADVENTURE
THIS WINTER AT THE
OMNIMAX® Theater
DEFINITION STUDIOS
K2 STUDIOS

Returning Fan Favorite!




**December 1-31**

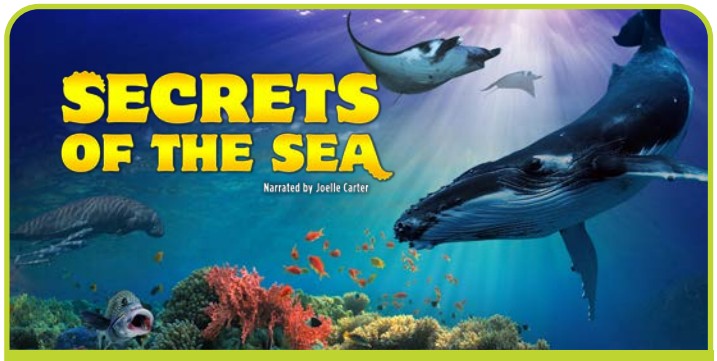
### *Deep Sky*

*Deep Sky* follows the high-stakes global mission to build JWST and to launch it into orbit one million miles from Earth, in an attempt to answer questions that have haunted us since the beginning of time. Thirteen billion years in the making, *Deep Sky* reveals the universe as we have never seen it before.




### *Lost Wolves of Yellowstone*

On January 12, 1995, wolves returned to Yellowstone, 50 years after their extinction within the park. Mollie Beattie, director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, carried the first Canadian-born wolf, Alpha Female Wolf No. 5, into the park's experimental acclimation enclosure. From that day forward, their lives would be forever connected. This is the true story of Mollie's Pack and the *Lost Wolves of Yellowstone*.




**Ends January 14**

SciFest

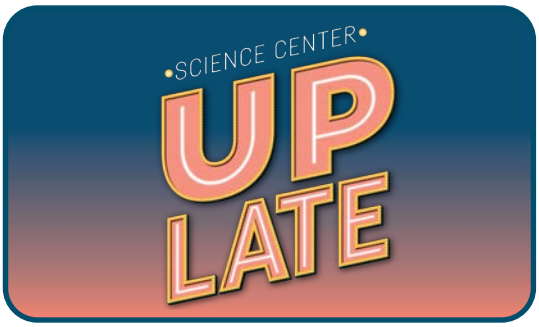
## SciFest: Engineering Expo

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27 | 9:30AM–4:30PM

We're celebrating 2027 Engineering Week with our biggest SciFest of the year! Engineering Expo returns to focus on incredible STEM partners from around our community.

Partners will share incredible inventions, hands-on activities, live demonstrations, and featured presentations at Energy Stage on the Lower Level. The event is FREE to all, so come chat with local experts! Who knows? Maybe you'll be inspired to be among St. Louis's next great engineers and builders.

See the latest news about SciFest at ***slsc.org/scifest***.




## Science Center Up Late: Laws of Attraction

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13 | 6:00–10:00PM

**We heard you loud and clear; you like being Up Late!** This popular 21+ series returns Saturday, February 13 for *Laws of Attraction*. We'll keep the lights on for you and a buddy (or someone special!) to have a drink, a bite to eat, and a great time exploring the science behind attraction. If you're suddenly feeling the pull, that's not gravity...it's just a good time calling!

Visit ***slsc.org/event-overview/up-late/*** for more details, and stay tuned for future events in this series!







# MEET THE TEAM: Hailey West

Digital Marketing Coordinator

> *Science is full of surprises, and there's always something new to discover.*

**What is the most fun thing about your job?**

As the digital marketing coordinator, I get to show people how incredible the Saint Louis Science Center is. I create content that highlights the experiences, exhibits, and discoveries happening here, whether that means filming social media videos, connecting with local influencers, or keeping up with the latest digital marketing trends.

What I love most is helping people see that science is fun and that the Science Center isn't just for kids. You can become part of a giant battery, stand beneath an 80-foot life-sized blue whale, touch real dinosaur fossils, or learn how certain scorpion venoms can help illuminate cancer cells for surgeons. It's rewarding to share those stories and hopefully inspire curiosity in someone who may discover a lifelong love of science, STEM, or the Science Center itself. Finding new ways to tell stories and connect with our audience allows me to combine my passion for science communication with creativity every day.

**Did you take field trips here as a kid, or just visit with your family?**

I remember coming to the Science Center on a school field trip when I was in elementary school. We watched an OMNIMAX® film about tornadoes, and I was completely immersed in it. I still remember feeling like I was right there in the middle of the storm. I also visited often with my family. I remember seeing the Sherlock Holmes exhibition and the Pompeii exhibition during its first visit to the Science Center. While I don't remember every detail, I do remember making wonderful memories with my family here. It's special to work at a place that was part of my childhood.

**What are you looking forward to sharing with your little one at the Science Center as she grows?**

My daughter, Vera, was born in January 2026, so this is an especially exciting time for our family. One thing I'm looking forward to is introducing her to the Discovery Room, which is designed for children ages six months to six years. She's at the perfect age to start exploring and engaging with the world around her. Watching her learn and discover new things every day has been amazing, and I can't wait to see that curiosity grow through hands-on experiences at the Science Center.

As a mom of a daughter, it's also important to me that she grows up knowing that science is for everyone. I want her to see that girls and women belong in STEM and that they can make meaningful contributions to science and the world around them. If the Science Center helps spark that confidence and curiosity, that would mean the world to me.

**What's your favorite piece of social media you've ever created for the Science Center?**

That's a difficult question because there have been so many memorable projects over the years. One standout was filming inside the Experience Flight simulator using a GoPro while I piloted it myself. It gave our audience a behind-the-scenes perspective and taught me that flying a simulator is much harder than it looks!





*Follow us to see what's happening at your museum!*

Saint Louis Science Center

stlsciencecenter

stlsciencecenter

More recently, I've loved creating content for *Blue Whale: The Exhibition*. One video showing how much blood a blue whale pumps in a single heartbeat, using the exhibition's recycling bin full of "blood," reached nearly 13 million views on TikTok. My favorite content, though, is always the content that features our team members. Those videos are fun to create, resonate strongly with our audience, and showcase the people working behind the scenes to make the Science Center such a special place. They bring authenticity to our content and help tell the human story behind our mission.

### What's a surprising science fact you've learned since you've worked here?

Honestly, there are too many to count. One of the best parts of my job is that I'm constantly learning. A few facts that have stuck with me are that bees can beat their wings more than 200 times per second; that Missouri's official state dinosaur is the hadrosaur because fossils were discovered here in Missouri; and that copper is what gives the Statue of Liberty its green color (I learned this from one our Energy Stage shows where different elements are used to change fire's color).

Every time I create new content, I seem to learn another surprising fact. After more than four years at the Science Center, that's still one of my favorite parts of the job. Science is full of surprises, and there's always something new to discover.



# Honoring Our Hospitality Heroes

We would like to take a moment to congratulate this year's group of Hospitality Heroes, all of whom were recently honored at an annual event hosted by Explore St. Louis. For some of our team members, this wasn't even their first nomination.

**This year's Hospitality Heroes are:**

**Alexis Schwamle**
Advanced Sales and Group Reservations Representative

**Cheyenne Davis**
Gallery Experience Interpreter

**Dave Gioia**
Manager of OMNIMAX and Featured Experiences

**Emily Lemonds**
Manager, Field Trips, Camps, and Classes

**Lacey Chaney**
Supervisor of Special Exhibitions

**Michelle McGruder**
Guest Services Director

**Octavia Pastoriza**
Guest Services Representative

**Thank you all for the wonderful work you do! Guests and your teammates appreciate your dedication.**

# Reducing the Carbon Footprint of Your Museum

Consider the amount of resources needed to heat and cool your home. Managing comfort across a **300,000+ square-foot facility** is no small feat.

**Recent updates to our boiler system have improved efficiency and reduced the output of carbon dioxide of our heating and cooling systems.**

The Science Center utilizes an hydronic (chilled and hot water loop) system to manage building cooling and strict humidity control. To achieve the stable, sustainable relative humidity levels required for a museum and its exhibits, the system operates a two-step dehumidification process.

1

## Air Handler Unit (AHU)

Because the Science Center is so large and requires dynamic HVAC needs, a network of 19 air handler units, or AHUs, are responsible for maintaining temperature control throughout. An air handler unit uses both hot and cold water from our central utility plant to change the temperature of the air going to a zone in the Science Center.

To deliver this hot water, a network of four-inch pipes connects the central boiler plant to the 19 AHUs.

**As part of the recent upgrades, the temperature of the hot water loop is now able to be dynamically adjusted based on heating needs.** The hot water loop temperature can now be adjusted from a constant 170 degrees down to 130 degrees depending on the heating demands of the Science Center. **Running this hot water loop at a lower temperature means we use less energy to heat the water.**

## Variable Speed Pump

Although housed separately from the boiler itself, the 40-horsepower variable speed pump is a critical component of the entire system.

A pump drives the rapid circulation of hot water through the four-inch piping network, ensuring efficient distribution to the air handling units across all floors.

**Instead of running at a constant high speed regardless of demand, the variable speed pump can speed up or slow down based on demand. Using smart design equipment ensures that no energy is wasted.**

2

## Boilers

Because this deeply dehumidified air is now too cold to supply directly to the galleries, it passes through a downstream reheat coil. Fed by a hot-water boiler, this reheat coil warms the air back up to the facility's designated temperature, successfully delivering perfectly balanced air for both ***conservation*** and ***comfort***.

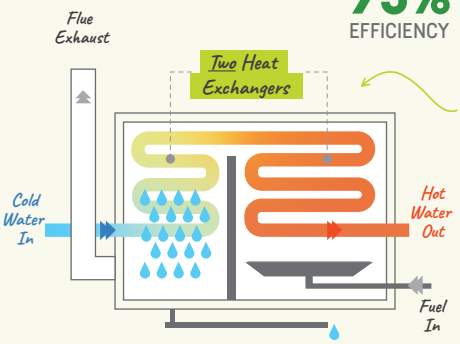
*New!*

**Our Condensing Boiler**




**95%** EFFICIENCY

OUTPUT:
**3,000,000** BTU/HOUR
Equivalent to Approximately
**75** Backyard Gas Grills




The secondary heat exchanger gives the boiler another opportunity to absorb heat from the exiting flue gases, capturing heat that would otherwise be wasted and increasing the boiler's efficiency.

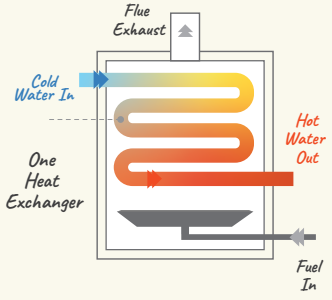
**Our new condensing boiler uses resources more efficiently with far less loss in the heating process. We can achieve the same output while using less fuel and energy because the new boiler is better at converting energy into usable heat.**

**Our Conventional Boilers**




**81%** EFFICIENCY

OUTPUT:
**2,656,000** BTU/HOUR
Equivalent to Approximately
**60** Backyard Gas Grills




The new boiler can run on its own and call on one of our existing boilers to assist in the event of extreme temperatures, maintenance, or failure.

## Why It Matters

These updates assist in the decarbonization of our system's footprint. More efficient equipment results in reduction in resources used, balancing traditional thermal performance with greenhouse gas mitigation across our heating plant's entire lifecycle.

Improving our system's sustainability is important to help the future of our climate for the next generations who visit the Science Center.




# An Afternoon of St. Louis Innovation in Action:

## Stereotaxis Helps Science Center Guests Try Surgical Robot Technology

In August, guests of all ages stepped into the world of cutting-edge surgical robotic technology during a Partner Pop-Up featuring Stereotaxis, a St. Louis company pioneering magnetic endovascular robotics throughout the world.

Together with physicians from BJC HealthCare, Stereotaxis representatives led stations at the Science Center showcasing the company's newest technology to treat common heart conditions like arrythmias.

During the Partner Pop-Up, guests tried out tools used by physicians and nurses, practiced diagnosing by using a heart model and portable equipment, and participated in activities showing both the scientific concepts behind magnets and how Stereotaxis employs magnetic technology to improve heart catheter procedures. They even had the opportunity to remotely "test drive" a Stereotaxis robot like physicians do via a live feed with the Stereotaxis demonstration lab.

**"It was wonderful to give guests the opportunity to understand this technology and its benefits through hands-on practice," says Maddie Earnest, the Science Center's associate director of gallery and exhibit content. "The experiences offered, including the chance to guide surgical robots and a real catheter through a maze, emphasize the real-life impacts of science and technology in a memorable way."**

Earnest adds, "It's exciting for the Science Center to highlight local companies like Stereotaxis. They are another example of how St. Louis is a Science City."



## Bringing Your Class to the Science Center

Your students have been coming to the Science Center since they were little kids. What else could we possibly offer our field trip visitors?

As it turns out, quite a bit! We offer a variety of in-depth programs for K-12 field trip groups, all aligned with NGSS and Missouri educational standards. We help make STEM learning fun and exciting through ag-tech activities like our GROW Tours or engineering projects like Rube Goldberg machines, just to name a few options!

A variety of class size and pricing options are available, and our list of programs is always growing! For more information, check out ***slsc.org/education/field-trips/***.

## Bringing the Science Center to Your School

STEM learning is increasingly important for today's students. The Science Center provides in-school programs from single classroom experiences all the way to full-scale assemblies!

Options include bringing the night sky a bit closer with our Portable Planetarium or presenting a *shockingly* good science demonstration illustrating the power of electricity.

Teachers and administrators can inquire about pricing and availability at ***slsc.org/education/field-trips***.

## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT:




*The Sutcliffes and their children at the Husky Shareholder Meeting in November 2025.*

# Grenville and Dianne Sutcliffe

**Adventurer, student, outdoorsman, soldier, pilot, entrepreneur, inventor—Grenville Sutcliffe has worn many hats. Perhaps he donned the most important one when he met Dianne Steed in a business class at the University of Missouri.**

"Our professor insisted we all stand up and introduce ourselves, and here comes a voice from the back of the room from a man dressed like Daniel Boone in leather fringe and boots," says Dianne. "Grenville certainly got my attention. Then he asked me to go flying."

That first date in the air, with Grenville at the controls of a private plane, led to marriage, six children, and a lifetime of building the family business, Husky Corporation, into a leading global provider of fuel-dispensing products and services.

Today, Husky's headquarters and manufacturing facilities are in Pacific, Missouri—but the company began in the Richmond Heights home of Grenville's parents, Eugene and Hazel.

"While Dad was peddling gas nozzles, station owners told him the new automatic shutoff nozzles weren't working," says Grenville. "So we started rebuilding those nozzles in our basement. I stood on an orange crate in front of a vise at age three helping Dad, and then he'd go back out and sell those nozzles."

Eugene's visits to service stations sparked an idea: plastic nozzle guards to prevent scratches on cars. The family began making them in their kitchen—the first of many family inventions. Hazel, for example, received the patent for the hold-open latch on nozzles.

As Eugene traveled to sell the family's new products, accompanied by his faithful husky (and company namesake), the business took shape. Grenville's eventual return to the company followed a circuitous path fueled by curiosity.



**“We have a great interest in what the Science Center is accomplishing, and we believe in supporting it.”**

After high school, Grenville immersed himself in a new culture while working on a Navajo reservation. His first attempt at college ended when he was invited to leave, so he and a friend applied to work at a ski lodge in Switzerland. Along the way, Grenville learned French and pursued adventures that included exploring Cairo, taking a boat from Cyprus to Beirut, crossing the Mandelbaum Gate in Israel, and spending his 21st birthday on a camel in the Kurdish mountains.

A draft notice brought Grenville back to the United States. He served in Vietnam as a Green Beret officer in the U.S. Army Special Forces and later in the 6th Armored Cavalry at Fort Meade, Maryland, after being wounded.

“My officer candidate training and service experiences were the best preparation I could have had to run Husky,” says Grenville.

And run Husky he did after returning to college and earning his degree, with Dianne helping him type all his papers. They graduated together and Dianne focused on their family finances and home while Grenville grew the business.

“Grenville took this company from a ‘ma and pa’ operation with 12 employees to a modern factory with more than 200,” says Dianne. “We have incorporated robotics, controlled by people, to improve accuracy, and we’ve achieved ISO certification, which indicates that Husky’s management system, products, and processes meet the global standards set by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).”

Husky continues to innovate, most recently adding 3D printing to its manufacturing process to shorten prototyping time. Grenville’s patents at Husky include improvements to the nozzle splash guard and inventing the swivel connector between the nozzle and hose at gas pumps. The company holds numerous industry patents and offers 2,000 products sold in all 50 states and more than 60 countries, representing a 50 percent market share. Dianne and Grenville are passionate about the employee experience and proud of the culture they have created at Husky.

The Sutcliffes still travel for business and pleasure, most recently to see their grandson graduate from U.S. Marine Corps boot camp. At home, they enjoy all that Forest Park offers—especially the Saint Louis Science Center. They loved bringing their children there and fondly remember celebrating one daughter’s birthday at the museum.

“I’ve always been fascinated by science, from seeing the craters of the moon as a kid to learning about the basic hydrocarbon chain for vapor recovery from Dianne’s brother, who’s a chemist,” says Grenville. “I see the value of STEM programs for our society and, in particular, for Husky and our team, which includes everyone from engineers to people who want to work in the trades.”

As Einstein Society members, Grenville and Dianne have enjoyed unique events that deepen their connection to the Science Center’s mission while helping keep the doors to wonder open for all. Husky is also a Science Center Corporate Partner and Spark Sponsor of Club WONDER: Light Years Ahead.

Giving back is close to their hearts. They are passionate about supporting Forest Park and all of its treasures, and the couple hope to instill that same spirit of philanthropy in their children and grandchildren. They are excited about what lies ahead for the Science Center.

“We have a great interest in what the Science Center is accomplishing, and we believe in supporting it,” says Grenville. “Ray Vandiver has done so much for this place, and everyone can sense the enthusiasm of the Science Center team for what they are doing,” adds Dianne.




## MISSION MOMENT:
## *Science on the Move* Tour at 4 Hands Brewery & Tasting Room

*September 2026*

Einstein Society members saw (and sipped!) the science of microbrewing inside 4 Hands Brewery & Tasting Room, exploring the tanks and stills on a guided tour and engaging with 4 Hands brewers and team members to learn more about the processes that turn yeast and grain into styles of beer and spirits.

**Thank you to our Einstein Society members for joining us, and cheers to 4 Hands Brewing for their continued partnership and support!**

Find more photos and details on the Science Center blog or scan the QR code!

## 2027 EVENTS

**Join or renew** your membership in the Einstein Society, the Science Center's community of steadfast supporters, and experience these moments bringing you closer to our mission and the amazing innovation happening right here in St. Louis.

*FEBRUARY*

***Science on the Move:* Tour of the Jeffrey T. Fort Neuroscience Research Building**

Visit one of the most significant science and research facilities in St. Louis and learn more about the world-class neuroscience innovation taking place at WashU Medicine.

*MARCH*

**Special Exhibition: *Death by Natural Causes* Opening Night Preview and Reception**

Enjoy complimentary exhibition admission and connect with Saint Louis Science Center President and CEO Ray Vandiver over beverages and bites.

*APRIL*

***Science on the Move:* Tour and Tasting at Neon Greens**

See how produce is planted, cared for, and harvested inside an urban hydroponic vertical farm and restaurant…then enjoy delicious selections made from their super fresh greens!

*MAY*

***Einstein's Incredible Universe* Night at the OMNIMAX® Theater**

Take a giant-screen expedition into the universe of Albert Einstein and the puzzles that ignited his imagination at a young age—not just on the screen, but with current experts on Einstein and his theories. Enjoy snacks and drinks beyond popcorn and soda.

*AUGUST*

***Science on the Move:* Tour of the First Alert 4 Weather Center and Studio**

Learn from expert, local Meteorologists just how they use the latest technology to create reliable weather forecasts to keep St. Louis safe and prepared.

*OCTOBER*

**Science on the Move: Tour of the Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate Company Factory**

See, hear, smell, and taste the science of chocolate making in the candy kitchen and on the factory floor of a local chocolatier with more than 100 years of combined confectionery experience.

*DECEMBER*

**Einstein Society Reception**

Enjoy a fun night at the Science Center that goes beyond a normal day at the museum. You'll find cocktails, special bites, and hands-on activities crafted just for you.




# The IRA Charitable Rollover

## A Tax-Wise Way to Help the Science Center

If you are 70 ½ or older, you can direct your IRA administrator to distribute a gift from your IRA to the Saint Louis Science Center. Any amount you transfer **by December 31** may count against your required minimum distribution, and you can direct up to the limit that is adjusted each year.

If you are married, you and your spouse can **each** give up to the limit that is adjusted per year if you both own an IRA. If you file taxes jointly, a double gift to your Science Center can go a long way toward reducing your taxes and fueling our mission to inspire everyone to be curious and engaged in science.

**Making a gift directly from your IRA comes with several advantages, including:**

- It is easy to make—just notify your IRA custodian (allowing for a few weeks to process your gift).
- The distributions may satisfy all, or part, of your required minimum distribution and are not subject to the IRS's charitable deduction limits.
- It minimizes the effect on your cash flow; the gift is from your pre-tax assets, not your checkbook.
- It allows you to make a significant gift to ensure your Science Center remains a place where discovery thrives, wonder awaits, and every family can see themselves in the future.



**If you have decided to make an IRA rollover gift to the Science Center, please let us know** so that we can be sure to credit you and thank you when your gift arrives. Chief Institutional Advancement Officer Bobby Sanderson is happy to talk with you and he may be reached at 314-289-4462 or *bobby.sanderson@slsc.org*.

# Club WONDER
## Light Years Ahead



## Raising Funds (and the Roof) for Science Learning

For one night only in October 2026, the Saint Louis Science Center sparkled with moments that took guests to the stars and beyond at Club WONDER: Light Years Ahead. Trillions of miles from the typical party, the Science Center's annual fundraising event took guests from the James S. McDonnell Planetarium all the way to the highway-spanning SkyBridge.

But Club WONDER was bigger than one night. Sponsors and guests **raised $400,000** in total to support the full breadth of the Science Center's year-round work—free access for all, STEM learning, hands-on exhibits, community engagement, and public programs that open doors to curiosity and inspire wonder.

Led by event chairs Edward and Margot Monser, co-chairs Mark and Anna Sears, and a dedicated volunteer committee, Club WONDER offered different levels of adventure and high-energy fun.

**"As President of the Science Center's Board of Trustees, I think our Science Center is one of our region's greatest gifts. Our Science Center shows that science is fun, but it also demonstrates how science is fundamental to our city, our community, and our daily lives. The more we can do to support it, the more it can do to support the people who call St. Louis home today and well into the future." – Ed Monser**

The evening started with a VIP Experience that had guests walking the red carpet outside the Planetarium before entering the Holekamp Family SkyPort for out-of-this-world cocktails. The party continued with a quick elevator ride up to the Orthwein StarBay, where heavenly drinks and bites awaited.







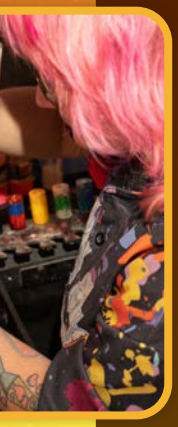






Scan to see the Club WONDER video











Local radio and television personality Julie Tristan sent the evening into orbit as emcee, stirring hearts and minds with the conviction that their presence means the Science Center can look light years ahead to inspire the thinkers, makers, explorers, and dreamers who will shape tomorrow.

**"We are so lucky that our Science Center is a place that belongs to everyone in our community. There are no barriers to access. No entry ticket fee. Nothing to stand between curiosity and discovery. That alone is something that makes this place special and deserving of our continued support, and why it's so meaningful that you all are here." – Julie Tristan**

Science Center President and CEO Ray Vandiver shared how the recent technology and entrance upgrades to the McDonnell Planetarium are just the start of a comprehensive evolution that will happen across the Science Center because people choose to support a space where wonder awaits everyone.

**"St. Louis is a Science City, where innovation has shaped our identity and economic vitality for generations," says Vandiver. "The generous leaders, partners, and people who made Club WONDER a success are also helping the Science Center remain a place where discovery thrives, talent grows, and every family can see themselves in the future."**

After a one-night-only Planetarium Show that highlighted the capabilities of the new hybrid technology, VIP guests raised their paddles to help fund the development of future shows that can take us to the edge of space and high above our planet. They then headed down to the Holekamp Family SkyPort to join all other celebration guests for more food, drinks, and fun.

Throughout the rest of the night, Club WONDER guests were able to try out virtual reality pods, express themselves in glow-in-the-dark body paint, capture the spirit of the evening in a photo booth, and dance the night away on the SkyBridge. Everyone showed their sparkle as part of a community of supporters who believe the Science Center stands as one of the region's clearest expressions of who we have been and who we hope to be.

## Special thanks to our **WONDER** committee!

**Chairs**
Edward and Margot Monser

**Co-Chairs**
Mark and Anna Sears

**Club WONDER Committee**
Donna and David Baringer
Michael J. Baughman
Barry Cervantes
James and Karen Dalton
Ida and Gerald Early
Emily and Colin Frost
Beverly Estes Guyton
Tracy Hart and Tom Hassel
Christine Jacobs and Hank Webber
Anne and John McDonnell
Rachel Presti and Jeremy Williams
Mark and Laura Sawyier
Kathy and Jim Sherby
Sarah Smith and Dick Fleming
Lecie and Richard Steinbaum
Mark Wrighton and Risa Zwerling Wrighton

## Thank You to Our **WONDER** Sponsors

**The Headliner**
Emerson
Margot and Edward Monser

**The Spotlight**
Once Films

**The Pulse**
Paz Family Foundation

**The Afterglow**
Ameren
The Boeing Company
Burns & McDonnell
David N. and Lelia J. Farr
Christine Jacobs and Hank Webber
Rachel Presti and Jeremy Williams
RGA
Risa Zwerling Wrighton and Mark Wrighton

**The Mixmaster**
Case IH
Commerce Bank
Enterprise Mobility
Gift Better
Lockton
Tarlton

**The Spark**
Carr Lane Manufacturing Co.
Karen and James Dalton
Husky Corporation
The Rome Group

**The Glimmer**
BJC HealthCare
Safety National
Washington University

**Additional Support By**
Heartland Coca-Cola
Pulseworks


Not all heroes wear capes.
Some wear lab coats.










***In recognition and remembrance of Dr. Becky Thompson,*** the Science Center's Vice President of Science and Education, who passed away this past summer.

Becky was quick to laugh, smart as a whip, nerdy in all the best ways, and possessed motivation that most of us can't even imagine. She was a physicist, an athlete, an author, a wife, a colleague, and a friend.

We will always remember her infectious smile, her leadership, and her devotion to sharing science with the wider community at every point in her career. We're grateful for the time she spent here with us.

To learn more about Becky and her contributions to the Saint Louis Science Center, our press release can be found at ***slsc.org/in-memoriam-becky-thompson/***.






If you would like to support the Science Center in Becky's memory, you may do so by visiting ***slsc.org/becky-fund***.

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