

More Than 600 Children, Professionals & Volunteers Participate In SGA Rocket Day That Mixes Stem Skills And Fun

Rocket Day brings STEM education to Black & Brown K-12 students in New Orleans; kids have fun, are exposed to STEM skills, and meet important role models

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Acclaimed Boeing Rocket Engineer Jennifer Boland-Masterson Attends the Event



In extraordinary display of science and engineering, more than 600 children, parents, and volunteers assembled solid fuel, stomp, and compression rockets that took flight during the [STEM Global Action](#) (SGA) Rocket Day hosted by SGA affiliate STEM NOLA last Saturday. The U.S. Department of Defense and [The Boeing Company](#) sponsored the annual event, which advances science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education.

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Dr. Calvin Mackie

Working with 150 Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and NASA volunteers, the K-12 students also assembled pop rockets, straw rockets, paper cup rockets, and rolled rockets as they learned about rocket proposition, trajectory, and thrust from the professionals and college interns participating in the event.

“Rocket day is about building the next generation of rocket scientists,” declared Jennifer Boland-Masterson, director of Boeing’s MAF Production Operations in New Orleans, who manages the team working on the world’s most powerful heavy-lift rocket. NASA will deploy it to take crews and cargo to the moon and Mars.

Dr. Calvin Mackie, founder and CEO of SGA and STEM NOLA, has developed initiatives that bring STEM education to Black & Brown K-12 students in under-resourced communities. His initiatives have impacted more than 100,000 students, 20,000 families and 5,100 schools across the U.S., and in five countries.

“Today our students get to feel like rocket scientists and envision careers as engineers or astronauts,” said Dr. Mackie, a former tenured engineering professor at Tulane University. “This is the day our kids really get to dream and see the future. All day we hear ‘Ooh, and ah’ from kids as they get to make and launch rockets. Our goal at SGA, STEM NOLA, and our other affiliates across the U.S. is to let children experience the joy of science, technology, engineering, and math as they learn.”

Further, Dr. Mackie explained the importance of allowing children to interact with STEM professionals, especially people of color who they can see as role models. For instance, he said that many children do not meet a doctor unless they are sick. “So, we have events where they meet medical doctors. This allows them to dream about becoming a doctor. Today, they met real rocket scientists, and they can dream about being one.”

Louisiana State Rep. Matthew Willard, a volunteer at the event, said he “was excited” because these types of programs help prepare children of color for jobs and careers in STEM, which diversifies the economy.

“The most important thing that should be prioritized is making sure that our current workforce, our students have the capabilities and the knowledge to take on these (STEM) jobs,” he said. “STEM NOLA and Rocket Day introduces the children of the greater New Orleans area to science, technology, engineering, and mathematic applications that make it fun. So, these kids are



Dr. Calvin Mackie & Acclaimed Boeing Rocket Engineer Jennifer Boland-Masterson



Children work on their rockets.

literally building rockets with their hands, and learning that science is exciting. Engineering is exciting and exploring some of the possibilities.”

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ABOUT STEM GLOBAL ACTION

Dr. Calvin Mackie founded STEM NOLA in 2013. The New Orleans non-profit is committed to expanding STEM education, especially in communities of color. In July 2021, Dr. Mackie launched STEM Global Action, a campaign and network pursuing STEM education for children, parents, and communities. His initiatives have impacted more than 100,000 students, 20,000 families and 5,000 schools across the U.S., and in five countries. An archive of Let's Talk STEM with Dr. Calvin Mackie podcast episodes is [HERE](#).

The STEM Global Action website includes:

STEM Global Action Today (<https://stemglobalaction.com/stem-global-action-today/>), a newsletter with comprehensive articles on some of the most important issues related to STEM, and takes readers into the lives of STEM educators and their extraordinary students, who will be the STEM leaders of tomorrow.

STEM Global Action Data Center (<https://stemglobalaction.com/stem-data-center/>), a one-stop resource library for studies, reports, video presentations and news coverage about STEM.

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