

Statement By Dr. Calvin Mackie, Founder and President of STEM Global Action

Groundbreaking Superdome STEM Event Can Spur Expanded STEM Learning Opportunities Across The U.S.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA , UNITED STATES, December 28, 2022

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- An extraordinary event transpired a week ago inside the Caesars Superdome. Just before kickoff of the R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl

on December 21, more than 2,000 parents and children in grades K-12 attended a STEM NOLA STEM FEST, where they learned about science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). This was a landmark moment, likely the first time STEM education and skills were ever connected

directly with a popular college football bowl game. It also symbolized much more.

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Chevron and R+L Carriers saw the value and importance in STEM learning and sponsored the festival, and the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation worked with STEM NOLA to organize it. Think about it. Three days before Christmas, more than 2,000 parents and children left their homes to come and engage in STEM activities including operating a robot, building functioning cars, constructing flying drones, watching the dissection of a sheep heart, riding a hovercraft, and much more. This was a huge, tradeshow-like environment that featured more than 60 stations

where K-12 kids and parents engaged in STEM learning and activities.

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Our nation must recognize the importance of STEM in our everyday lives. STEM-based careers are in high-demand in today's rapidly changing world. These careers are -- and will continue to be -- essential to address the complex challenges of today and tomorrow. STEM-related careers



are resilient, long-lasting and are essential to the growth and stability of our economy, especially during economic recessions and times of crisis.

The necessary changes to achieve equity in STEM education and careers requires the concerted efforts of all of us - students and parents, as well as educators and public and private sector leaders to commit to the advancement of quality STEM education in and out of school. That means supporting after school programs and encouraging all children to attend. It means coordinating more opportunities for STEM professionals to interact with grade school students so they can imagine futures in the varied and critical STEM- related careers. The cybersecurity analyst who protects our national defense, the chemist who develops the next vaccine that afflicts the globe, or a physician who understands the unique needs of communities of color and works to eliminate inequities in patient care. But it requires sustained efforts to advance STEM education for girls, and for Black & Brown children, whose schools often lack the resources available to wealthier communities. The data is quite clear in documenting gender and race disparities in STEM-related professions. However, there is a formula for fixing it, for giving girls and children of color opportunities. What transpired at the Superdome is part of the answer. Parents and children deserve more opportunities to engage in STEM. Listen to their voices.



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Jayden, 8, created his own slime. "I'm having a lot of fun and I want to be a scientist," he says

"Oh, my God," exclaims a parent. "I love it. Today is awesome for the kids, especially on a good cold Wednesday. They have something to do. Oh, I love the activities they have. Each activity, each table is knowledge for them!"

STEM NOLA is an affiliate of STEM Global Action, which holds STEM FESTs in communities around the country. We introduce parents and students to the value of STEM education and get them into career pipelines. We create opportunities for children to participate and have role models in STEM careers. All children, parents, and communities deserve to have these opportunities so we can position girls and students of color to be part of the future STEM workplace. Now, is the time to act.

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ABOUT STEM GLOBAL ACTION

In 2013, Dr. Calvin Mackie founded STEM NOLA, a New Orleans-based, non-profit committed to expanding STEM education at churches, community centers and schools, particularly in communities of color. His goal is to make STEM education available in ALL communities. In July 2021, Dr. Mackie [launched STEM Global Action](#), a campaign and network of affiliates, including STEM NOLA, that pursues STEM education for children, parents and communities across the U.S., and abroad. His initiatives have impacted more than 100,000 students, 20,000 families and 5,100 schools across the U.S., and in five other countries. In addition to an informative website with a data center, newsroom and newsletter, Dr. Mackie hosts the Let's Talk STEM with Dr. Calvin Mackie [podcast series](#). It features interviews with guests from all aspects of STEM – entrepreneurs, educators, corporate leaders, students – who talk about the importance of STEM in their lives today. They are the mentors for the next generation of STEM leaders, models of success for others to follow.

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