

Earth Day STEM FEST Presented By Blue Origin's Club For the Future and SGA Expands STEM Education for Orlando Children

The SGA approach is to introduce youth to early and ongoing exposure to STEM concepts in rigorous, culturally relevant environments using hands-on activities

ORLANDO, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, April 25, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 500 children and adults attended the special STEM FEST presented by [Blue Origin's Club for the Future](#) and [STEM Global Action](#) (SGA), where K-12 students engaged with 60 different science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) activities and designed, built and raced wind-powered cars, flew drones and launched rockets.



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Throughout the event on Saturday at Barnett Park, students learned about wind and solar energy, as well as coding, designing, and programming robots. It was a special Earth Day STEM FEST that allowed children and parents to increase their knowledge of jobs and careers in STEM while engaging in hands-on activities and demonstrations.

“We are here today because we are celebrating Earth Day with Blue Origin's Club for the Future,” said Dr. Calvin

Mackie, founder of SGA. “We can build a cleaner and better earth, but we need more people committed to STEM. At SGA we believe it is important for students to see, touch, feel and explore what STEM means. It creates curiosity in their minds, and it's that curiosity that takes them on a pathway to becoming a STEM professional.”

Dr. Mackie also applauded the partnership with Blue Origin's Club for the Future, saying, “It is the teamwork that makes the dream work. These types of events are not possible without great partnerships. That's why community-based organizations like STEM Global Action need to

partner with organizations like Blue Origin so we can come together and bring communities the STEM education that their children need and deserve.”

Gwen Griffin, Executive Director of Club for the Future, agreed, saying, “We want children of all backgrounds to see themselves in STEM careers that they may not yet know about. We’re pleased to partner with STEM Global Action to launch this STEM FEST to curious young minds in Orlando.”

According to the children, SGA and Club for the Future were successful in piquing their interests, while they had fun with STEM activities.

Amy Sanchez, 11, wants to be a veterinarian, but she enjoyed many of the activities. “I made slimes and stuff like that. Played with drones, and learned about magnetics and even engines,” she said, adding that she also learned about wind turbines.

Her mother, Carol Pinera, said that two years ago the family moved to Orlando from Louisiana, where they had previously been engaged with STEM NOLA, which is SGA’s flagship affiliate. “This program is fantastic,” she said. “We are proud to have been associated with STEM NOLA. Dr. Mackie kept his promise that he would do an event in Orlando. We invited our friends and coworkers to come here today because we know how powerful this is for our children.”

Mike Scott, an Orange County Commissioner for District 6, also cited the importance of STEM events.

“It lays the foundation,” he said. “It gets kids interested in STEM careers. It gives them access and exposure. When you look at young people of any background, they think about sports and



Hundreds of children and parents enjoy STEM FEST IN Orlando.



Dr. Mackie with Amy Sanchez, 11, and mother, Carol Pinera, at STEM FEST.

games and stuff like that. They would think about so much more if they were exposed to these kinds of activities. It starts at an early age. We need to show these kids multiple options so that when they decide what they want to do and what they want to be, it's a well-informed decision."

Through years of work, Dr. Mackie learned the importance of introducing youth to early and ongoing exposure to STEM concepts in rigorous, culturally relevant environments. At the foundation of Dr. Mackie's approach is a community engagement model that helps all children, especially those from low-resourced communities, overcome challenges and barriers that can prevent them from attending STEM learning programs.

"It is critical to unlocking their future, to opening the doors to the economic opportunities and careers that STEM can uniquely provide," Dr. Mackie said. "Our model features paid programmatic staff, college and professional volunteers, hands-on learning opportunities, and a culture of excellence. Our approach provides long-term engagement and ongoing mentoring for participants."

In 2013, Dr. Mackie founded STEM NOLA, a non-profit organization created to expose, inspire, and engage communities in STEM. Over 10 years, STEM NOLA and other affiliates have engaged more than 125,000 K-12 students in hands-on, project-based STEM activities. In 2021, Dr. Mackie launched STEM Global Action to advance K-12 STEM education across the U.S. and the world. Dr. Mackie is working with public officials, corporate leaders, and philanthropic groups to start new SGA affiliates and bring high-level STEM learning to new locations.

ABOUT STEM GLOBAL ACTION

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 125,000 students, 20,000 families, and 5,100 schools across the U.S., and in five countries. Here is an archive of Let's Talk STEM with Dr. Calvin Mackie [podcast episodes](#).

The STEM Global Action website includes:

STEM Global Action Today (<https://stemglobalaction.com/stem-global-action-today/>) is 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/>) is a one-stop resource library for studies, reports, video presentations, and news coverage about STEM.

ABOUT CLUB FOR THE FUTURE

Blue Origin's Club for the Future (<https://clubforfuture.org/>) is a foundation whose mission is to inspire future generations to pursue careers in STEM and to help invent the future of life in space

for the benefit of Earth. The Club and its partners are doing this through its Postcards to Space program (<https://www.clubforfuture.org/missions/>), space-focused events and lessons, and access to space on Blue Origin's rockets.

Michael K. Frisby
Frisby & Associates
+1 202-625-4328

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