

President Biden Honors STEM NOLA with the Prestigious Presidential Award For Excellence In Mentoring STEM Students

In 2024, STEM Global Action engaged over 40,961 students in the US, reaching them through STEM Fests, STEM Saturdays, Tech Camps, and STEM Fellows programs

NEW ORLEANS, LA, UNITED STATES, January 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- President Joe Biden has awarded [STEM NOLA](#) the prestigious Presidential

Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring ([PAESMEM](#)). The New Orleans-based non-profit is a national leader in breaking down racial, ethnic, and gender barriers in teaching Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to K-12 students.



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The PAESMEM recognizes the nation’s top teachers and organizations for their efforts in mentoring students from underrepresented groups. “These awards honor the vital role that America’s teachers and mentors play in shaping the next generation of technical leaders, including scientists, engineers, explorers, and innovators,” said the presidential message announcing the awards. STEM NOLA is celebrated for its exceptional impact on the future of STEM education and workforce development. The award includes a \$10,000 prize.,

“Receiving the Presidential Award is a monumental honor

for STEM NOLA,” said Dr. Calvin Mackie, President, co-founder and CEO of STEM NOLA. “The award highlights the incredible power of mentoring in unlocking the untapped potential of students from all socioeconomic backgrounds to learn STEM. Our work is rooted in the communities we serve. Mentoring is at the core of realizing success in STEM for historically underrepresented students.”

Dr. Mackie congratulated his employees, partners, and volunteers, saying the award is a testament to their dedication and commitment.

“This recognition boosts our morale and inspires us to continue our mission with even greater determination,” Dr. Mackie said. “At STEM NOLA, we focus on providing high-quality, hands-on STEM experiences and mentorship opportunities that open doors for young people—especially those from underserved communities. This award affirms our belief that every student, regardless of race or background, deserves the opportunity to succeed in STEM, and it recognizes the power of mentoring in making that vision a reality.”

STEM NOLA was founded in 2013 when Dr. Mackie’s sons, Myles and Mason, complained that they weren’t interested in science anymore because their grade school teachers didn’t engage them enough. Dr. Mackie was disheartened; he wanted his sons to enjoy science and engineering as he did. He took his sons to the garage on weekends, where they did science experiments and hands-on adventures that reignited their interest.

Neighborhood kids began joining them in the garage, with the group growing to more than 20 each weekend.

“That’s where STEM NOLA was born,” said Dr. Mackie, a former tenured engineering professor at Tulane University. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Morehouse College and a Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Georgia Tech.

Dr. Mackie and his wife, Tracy, seeded STEM NOLA with \$100,000 of their savings. Dr. Mackie pleaded his case to local corporations, philanthropic organizations, and government officials and won their support. Entergy Corporation, the power company, and Chevron Gulf of Mexico



Dr. Calvin Mackie

Business Unit became their prime sponsors. He recruited churches and community centers as teaching facilities. STEM NOLA soon became the model for bringing STEM learning to under-resourced communities. "We are deeply grateful to all our supporters, whose belief in our mission has been instrumental in our success," Dr. Mackie said.

In 2021, Dr. Mackie launched [STEM Global Action](#) (SGA), a network of affiliates, like STEM NOLA, in locations nationwide. In 2024 alone, SGA engaged over 40,961 participants across 14 U.S. states, reaching students through events such as STEM Fests, STEM Saturdays, Tech Camps, and STEM Fellows programs. Since its founding, SGA has touched the lives of more than 200,000 students and has worked with over 2,500 college student volunteers and 1,500 professional mentors. This vast support network has provided students with hands-on experiences that have sparked curiosity, critical thinking, and a desire to pursue high-wage, high-growth careers in STEM fields like technology, healthcare, and engineering.

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