SCIENCE MILL

2025 Impact Report

FOREWORD

This year marks a significant milestone for the Science Mill: our 10-year anniversary. What began as a vision to create a place where curiosity meets possibility has grown into a vibrant hub for STEM learning in the region, serving thousands of students, families, and educators each year through both the museum experience and our unique offsite programs. Over the past decade, we have seen firsthand how hands-on discovery and imaginative exploration can inspire the next generation of innovators. None of this would have been possible without the unwavering support of our community, partners, board members, founders, and staff who have been a vital part of this journey from the very beginning.

As the current Board Chair, I feel both honored and energized to be a part of the organization at such a pivotal moment. I represent not only a continuation of the strong foundation built over the last decade but also a fresh vision for how we can expand our reach and deepen our impact. In 2025, we celebrated new achievements that reflect both our growth and our mission in action. Our summer STEM Career Immersion Camp program reached more students than ever before, making it the most successful in our history and leaving a lasting impression on young scientists and engineers, as you will see in the following pages. We also unveiled new exhibits like the Flight Lab and Fueling the Fast Lane, and pioneered new events such as Dino Discovery Day, Mini Makers for preschoolers, and Sips + STEM for science-loving adults to further inspire a lifelong love for STEM in our community.

Our collective future is in the hands of the next generation, which is why we at the Science Mill renew our commitment to empower the youth to think like scientists and engineers – and even become one. To do this, we are dedicated to continuing to innovate, expand STEM access, and serve as a trusted STEM resource for learners of all ages and backgrounds. With the continued partnership of our supporters and community, we are ready to write the next chapter of impact by empowering more kids in more places and more ways. The innovators of tomorrow certainly deserve it.

This 2025 Impact Report covers the organization's progress and impact from September 2024 to August 2025.

Greg Hodgson
Chair of the Board

ABOUT US

The Science Mill is a nonprofit science museum designed and dedicated to creating equitable access for students in underserved communities to STEM through an innovative platform of experiences and enrichment programs.

Located in Johnson City, a rural town in central Texas with a population of 2,000, we are a fully experiential museum of self-exploration where kids learn by doing, experimenting, discovering, and most importantly, by being curious.

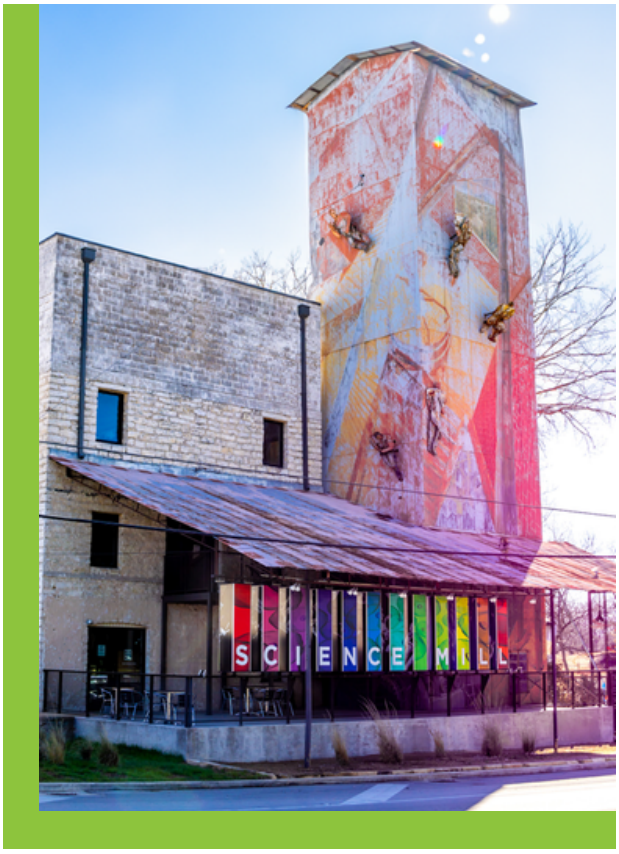
400,000+
Museum visitors

91,000+
Field trip students

50+
Interactive exhibits

WHY JOHNSON CITY?

The Science Mill is at the forefront of a critical mission to bridge the significant rural STEM gap in Texas. Despite having the largest rural student population in the nation, Texas faces a stark disparity where rural students consistently lag behind their urban peers in STEM education and career readiness due to limited access to resources and geographic isolation. With its unique position at the nexus of the Hill Country's rural communities and the urban populations of Austin and San Antonio, the Science Mill is able to serve both populations. By acting as a central hub for hands-on, high-impact STEM programs, we directly address these barriers, providing *opportunities to empower economically disadvantaged and at-risk students and cultivate the next generation of innovators for all of Texas.*



MISSION

For all students, regardless of economic status, location, gender, or race, to have equitable access to STEM programs and be able to envision themselves in a future career in STEM.

Our programs are focused on making STEM exciting and engaging and introducing kids to a world of future STEM career opportunities.

Utilizing the science museum as a testbed for creating new strategies for student engagement in STEM and STEM careers, we have created a roadmap for how we, as a museum-based center for informal learning, play an important role in growing the number of underrepresented students that will enter the STEM workforce.

A DECADE OF IMPACT

This year, the Science Mill celebrates its 10th year of bringing unforgettable experiences to families and hands-on learning opportunities to youth in Texas and beyond.

2012

The Science Mill is founded by Bonita L. Baskin, Ph.D. and Robert P. Elde, Ph.D.

2015

The museum doors open to the public and welcomes its first field trips

2016

The Science Mill pilots its flagship program, STEM Career Immersion Camps (SCI Camps)

Outreach Impact:
225 students
12 teachers

2025

The most successful SCI Camps year yet

A diverse offering of STEM programming year-round

Outreach Impact since 2016:
17,000+ students
400+ teachers

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO STEM

Successfully empowering learners requires a complex strategy.

That is why our approach is multifaceted: from cultivating a museum space for informal learning and community building to developing engaging off-site programs, the Science Mill is dedicated to supporting underserved students in as many ways as possible – all year round.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
FIELD TRIPS				GROUP VISITS				FIELD TRIPS			
LABS ON THE GO				SCI CAMPS				LABS ON THE GO			
AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS				SUMMER CLUBS				AFTER SCHOOL STEM CLUBS			

FIELD TRIP FROM HOLLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

SCI CAMP AT SPRING ISD

SCIENCE SHOW AT THE MUSEUM

Field Trips

With over 50+ TEKS-aligned hands-on exhibits, and the option to have **Science Shows** and **Learning Labs**, the museum welcomes thousands of students every year.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

STEM Career Immersion (SCI) Camps

The Science Mill's flagship program, SCI Camps are a week-long summer program at partner sites that combines engaging experiences inspired by a variety of STEM careers.

Labs on the Go

Labs on the Go are hands-on, video-supported STEM experiences delivered straight to the classroom.

STEM Discovery Clubs

These are summer and after-school activities designed to engage and inspire further learning.

OUR UNIQUE APPROACH


SCI CAMP AT ARK OF THE HIGHLAND LAKES (MARBLE FALLS ISD)

To accomplish our mission of making STEM more accessible to learners in Texas and beyond, we have developed a unique approach.

This comprehensive strategy, which drives all of our STEM programs, involves making an impact on multiple levels: through *strong community partnerships, empowering teacher training, and a high-quality, career-focused STEM curriculum.*

01. Partnership
Programs are directly delivered to students through their school, community organization, or local higher education institution.

02. Training
We train, empower, and support teachers to facilitate the programs and encourage them to bring these skills into their classrooms.

03. Content
Curricula focus on real-world STEM career challenges where students learn by doing.

04. Concept
All supplies are provided at no cost to the district, along with a one-year curriculum license.

05. Goal
We empower teachers to inspire their students by making these tools available throughout the year.

OUR 2024-2025 IMPACT

Outreach Programs

2,276 students & **96** teachers served across **27** sites
17,000+ since 2016

Impact through SCI Camps, Labs on the Go, and STEM Discovery Clubs

Field Trips

10,382 students from **167 schools** welcomed during SY 2024-2025
91,000+ since 2015

INSPIRING FUTURE SCIENTISTS & INNOVATORS THROUGH

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Lack of access to STEM programs because of location is a significant hurdle for rural students. This is why the Science Mill developed its unique outreach programs: Summer STEM Career Immersion Camps (SCI Camps), Labs on the Go, and STEM Discovery Clubs. These programs, developed by veteran educators and museum professionals, are designed to be delivered directly to the communities. They are TEKS-aligned and turn-key for the ease and convenience of our partners, and maximum positive impact for the students.

SCI CAMPS

The Science Mill's flagship program, SCI Camps are a week-long summer program at partner sites that combines engaging experiences inspired by a variety of STEM careers. Our model provides an innovative, inquiry-based curriculum, coupled with intensive training that creates a synergy of learning for both instructors and campers.

- Focus on real-world STEM career challenges
- Three-year themed curriculum
- Programs for grades 3-5 and 6-8, from 15-30 students per week
- Climate Action Incubator camp available for high school students
- One-week, full-day themed camps provide more than 35 hours of curricula dedicated to different STEM fields, with a focus on STEM careers
- Inquiry-based practices and design thinking in the areas of chemistry, biology, computer science, robotics, physics, engineering, and entrepreneurship
- All materials are shipped to the site, with paid trainings and stipends available for instructors

2025 THEME: APOCALYPSE

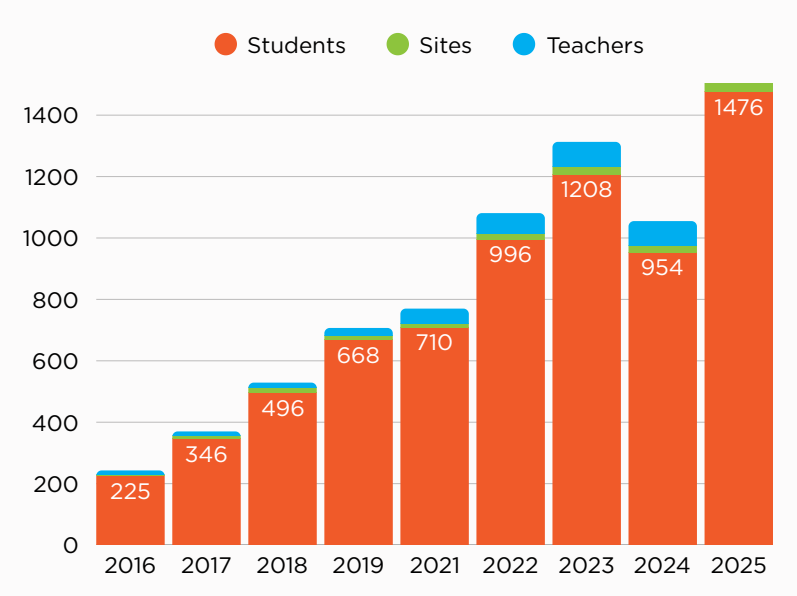
Campers will have to use their STEM knowledge in fields like chemical engineering, renewable energy, and robotics to create solutions to survive in their imagined scenario!

SCI CAMP AT SCHREINER UNIVERSITY

GROWING OUR IMPACT

Every year is different, but our mission remains the same: to provide equitable access to STEM to as many kids as possible. As the challenges of the times evolve, so do we, by adapting and innovating our approach to continue growing our impact.

SCI Camps Historical Overview



LABS ON THE GO

Our Labs on the Go program brings the excitement of a museum visit directly to the classroom through a turnkey, hands-on, video-enhanced STEM adventure. Allowing students to experience the relevancy of STEM content in this way creates a powerful opportunity for them to see themselves in a future STEM career, build STEM efficacy, and grow confidence in STEM skills.

STEM DISCOVERY CLUBS

This program is designed to allow students in grades 3-5 and 6-8 to experience the impact of an immersive program in a flexible setting. It can be used in a traditional after-school model, wherein there will be 30 unique students at each lesson, or in a more club-type model, where the same 30 students will participate in every lab. Clubs curriculum can also be used to provide enrichment during half-day summer programs or summer academic remediation time.

2025 SCI Camps

2025 marks the most successful year of SCI Camps in terms of number of sites and students served – a testament to the generous support of our sponsors to meet the need for quality STEM programming within the state and beyond.

1476 students
Record high

96 teachers
Record high

27 sites
Record high

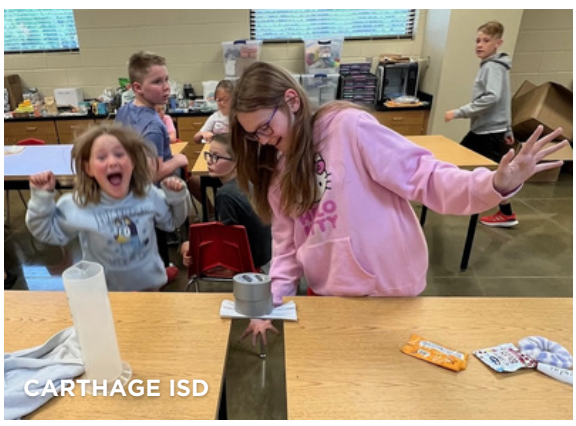
100% of Campers attended at no-cost

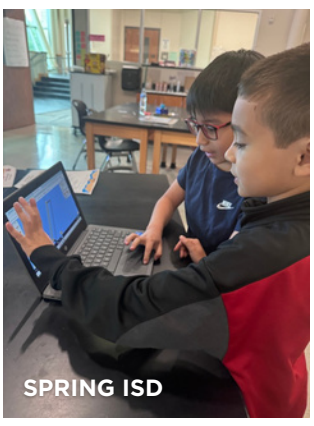
45% of Campers were female

58% of Camps were held in rural communities

Boerne ISD
Carthage ISD
CAST ALA
CAST IMAGINE
CAST STEM
CAST TEACH
DeKalb ISD
Fort Davis/Marfa
Friends of Ngong Road (Nairobi, Kenya)
Georgetown ISD
Hays CISD
Highland Lakes Crisis Network (Marble Falls ISD)
Iraan-Sheffield ISD
Lamar Consolidated ISD
Leakey ISD
Marshall ISD
Mason ISD
Redwater ISD
Region 1 ESC
Rio Grande City ISD @ South Texas College
San Antonio Family Services
San Marcos CISD
Schreiner University
Spring ISD (Elementary)
Spring ISD (Middle)
Spring ISD (High School)
Texas Lutheran University


NAIROBI, KENYA


CARTHAGE ISD


SPRING ISD


SAN MARCOS ISD

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Why should someone come to SCI Camps next year?

"I think people should come to this STEM camp because it can be fun and you get an idea of what job you want."

San Antonio ISD

"Someone should come to this camp because it is super fun with great activities. You get to test your skills and do experiments."

Boerne ISD

"porque es divertido y puedes ser creativo *(because it's fun and you can be creative)*"

Hays CISD

"If they are interested in climate change or science!"

Region 1

IMPACT Survey feedback from students

84% of campers believe they can be successful in a STEM career

94% of campers know more about STEM careers

85% of campers feel more confident and excited for their STEM classes

64% of campers would be interested in pursuing a STEM career/job

EDUCATOR TESTIMONIALS

"Not only has this program created excitement for STEM, but also for college. About 80-90% of students have never visited a college or university, so being able to be at [South Texas College] for a week, using college science labs and classrooms, has been an invaluable experience that now has our students saying, 'I can't wait to go to college.'"

ADELINA VILLARREAL
Career and Technical Education director at Rio Grande City Grulla ISD

"Really great camp, my son attended but with different instructors in a separate class, and he loved it. He is so interested in the micro:bit now, and told everyone about his water filter and ALL the things he did. I really enjoyed leading our group and I love that I will probably teach some of these students when they get to high school. It really gives me a sense of community in our district. Thank you for the opportunity."

DANIEL JASSO
Instructor, Hays CISD

SPECIAL FEATURE: PARENT TESTIMONIALS

Impact at Boerne ISD and Schreiner University camps

"I'm literally tearing up over here—this week has meant the world to us! While we had our share of uncertainties going into it, it ended up being so worth it in every way!💜💙💚🧡

We've had nonstop feedback from parents saying their kids were never really into science or math—but this week changed that! We played kickball with them every day (which some had never even heard of before!), and built connections we'll never forget!"

– Denise Bakkar, Site Coordinator

I was going to chat with you briefly next week when I picked up his lunchbox! This was his first STEM camp! To be completely honest, I was not sure how it would go because science, and math are not two favorite subjects for him. If it does not involve basketball, football, baseball, or soccer he is less than impressed. However he raved about every project y'all did every day! He was so proud to bring home his work and show me. He was sad it came to an end. You guys are so awesome! Thank you again for hosting such an awesome camp for the kids in our community!

I can't thank yall enough for spending this past week with my boys! They had a wonderful time. Every day they came home so excited to share what they had learned and what they did. And every morning they couldn't wait to get up and do it all over again. They said "I love this camp, it's the best!" Hats off to you guys!

Thank you so much for this camp - Brody is so hard to pull information out of during the school year and summer camps are always "yeah, I had fun today" but we literally couldn't get him to talk about anything else during dinner this week! He learned so much and had a blast every single day. He was still talking about it at bedtime tonight!!

TRANSFORMING LIVES IN TEXAS AND BEYOND: THE NGONG ROAD PARTNERSHIP

NGONG ROAD
Children's Foundation

Nairobi, Kenya

The Science Mill's dedication to STEM education extends far beyond its physical location, as demonstrated by its impactful partnership with the Ngong Road Children's Foundation (NRCF) in Nairobi, Kenya. This collaboration brings hands-on, interactive STEM learning to children in Kenya, providing them opportunities to learn skills in robotics, coding, biomimicry, and engineering.

2024 was the second year of this partnership. During this year, the STEM camp engaged 69 out of 73 students (95% attendance) from Grades 7 and 8 (34 in grade 8 and 39 in grade 7). 5 science teachers were also trained for the program.

2024 OUTCOMES

95% student attendance

56% of Grade 8 campers went on to choose STEM as their pathway in senior secondary school

"We believe [this outcome] is largely influenced by [the Science Mill] STEM camps."

- Kelvin Thuku, Programme Director

FIELD TRIPS

10,382 students welcomed
School year 2024-2025

With over 50+ TEKS-aligned hands-on exhibits, and the option to have *Science Shows* (30-minute science demos), *Learning Labs* (45-minute hands-on activity), or *Cross-Curricular field trip* with the LBJ National Historical Park, the museum welcomes thousands of students every year.


HOLLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

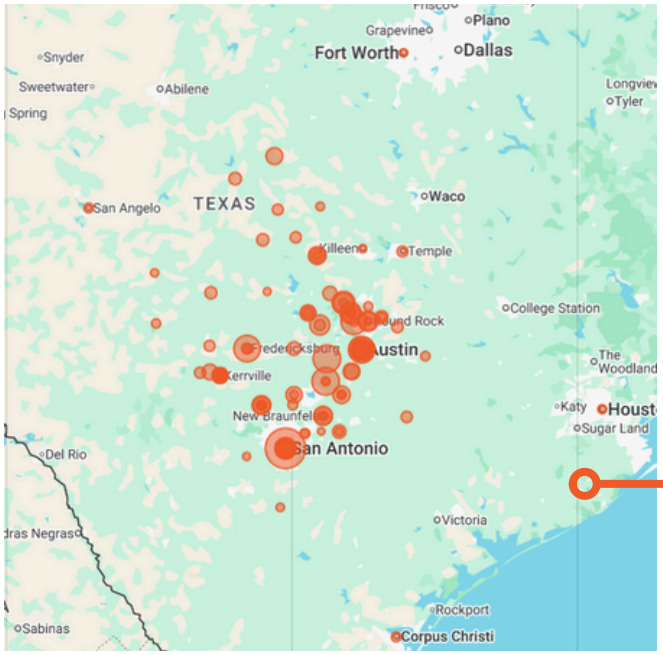

ZIP AWAY LEARNING LAB


SCIENCE SHOW

167 SCHOOLS

25%
ATTENDED ON A SCHOLARSHIP

51%
WERE TITLE 1 SCHOOLS

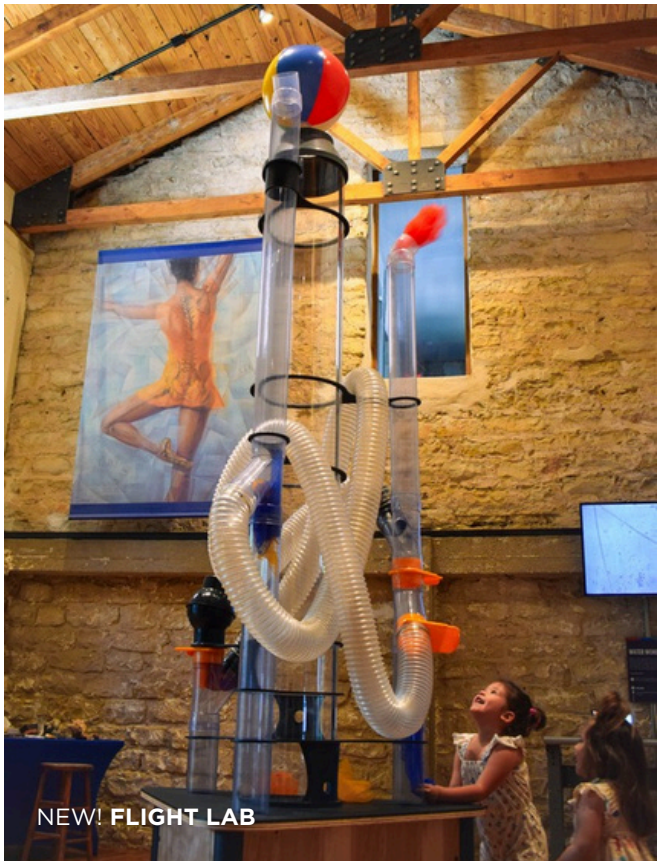


Snapshot of 2024-2025 field trip goers

Including students from Fort Worth, Houston, San Angelo, Corpus Christi, Seguin, Kerrville, and more

HANDS-ON EXHIBITS
NEW & UPGRADED

Continuous innovation that inspires drives our museum. In the past year, we have unveiled three new exhibits: *Flight Lab*, an immersive exhibit on aerodynamics; *Pose Play*, an AI-powered jukebox, and; *Fueling the Fast Lane*, a gamified racing experience that highlights the carbon footprints of different vehicle fuel types.


NEW! **FLIGHT LAB**

NEW! **POSE PLAY**


SPONSORED BY THE TEXAS MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM
NEW! **FUELING THE FAST LANE**

BANANA PIANO


INCREDIBLE BALL MACHINE

SPECIAL PROJECT
MATH UNIVERSE

MATH UNIVERSE

SIMONS FOUNDATION

The Science Mill's Math Universe program, supported by the Simons Foundation, brings the beauty, wonder, and practical power of mathematics to rural students and their families through hands-on, self-paced activities designed to spark curiosity across generations.

This program was debuted at the Blanco Lavender Festival last June, and will also be delivered to various outreach events this fall, culminating in a town-wide Pi Day event in March 2026.

SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Our ability to inspire the next generation of innovators and leaders is made possible by our incredible network of partners. We extend our deepest gratitude to the donors, school districts, and educators who are the very foundation of our success. Without your support, we simply could not be the change agent for STEM education that our mission demands.

The need to reach children across Texas, from urban to rural communities and from all family and ethnic backgrounds, is more critical now than ever. The future leaders in every field of science, technology, engineering, and math are out there, waiting for the opportunity to build the confidence needed to succeed. Your partnership ensures that we can continue to provide transformative programs and empower the next generation of STEM leaders.

DONATE

hilda.kruml@sciencemill.org
844-263-6405

Mailing:
Attn: Hilda Kruml
PO Box 38, Johnson City, Texas 78636

WHAT YOUR SUPPORT CAN DO

- Fund hands-on STEM summer camps for underserved children in Texas
- Provide field trip scholarships for students from Title 1 schools
- Develop new, innovative STEM exhibits that inspire curiosity and serve the Texas Hill Country community
- Inspire the next generation of STEM leaders