SCIENCE SATURDAY

2025 SCIENCE SATURDAY REPORT

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This event is made possible thanks to The Andreas C. Dracopoulos Family Science and Society Initiative, the Bessent-Freeman Family Foundation, The Wasily Family Foundation, and The Steinman Family Foundation.

Thank you to RockEDU Science Outreach, the RU Development Office, the catering, custodial, and A/V teams, and everyone else who contributed to organizing this event.

All photos were taken by Matthew Septimus.

About the Event

SCIENCE SATURDAY

What is Science Saturday?

Science Saturday is a STEM festival that welcomes families to the Rockefeller campus for a day of science-filled fun, while also showcasing the wonderful diversity of science and scientists. The first Science Saturday was in 2014.

The "unit" of Science Saturday is the learning station.

A Learning Station is what we call each unit that makes up the festival and is centered on a specific scientific theme. Scientists and community members volunteer their time to run each Learning Station. Attendees visit the many Learning Stations available throughout our building.

The results? SCIENCE = FUN!

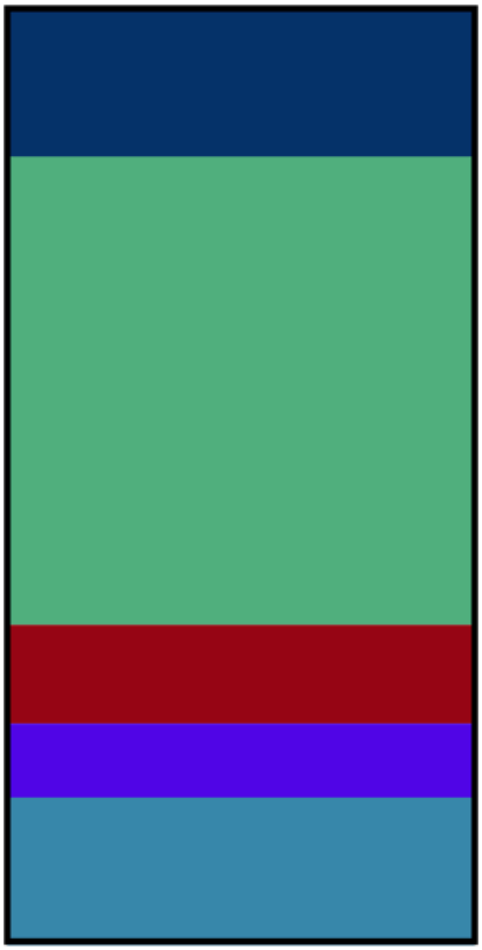
Attendees are exposed to many different science fields and interact with hundreds of scientists and scholars to learn about our world. **This year's event set a new record for the number of Learning Stations and the number of community members who volunteered!**

2025 Learning Stations Overview

SciSat25 had a record 39 Learning Stations split between 6 floors of the Collaborative Research Center and the lower outdoor parking lot. Learning Stations were grouped by similar themes on each floor.

Learning Station Origins

How were the activities created?



Rockefeller Affiliated Stations (7) were developed by Rockefeller Scientists and represent their creative science ideas.

Community Partner Stations (19) highlight the diverse types of science relevant to our partners around the city.

Tri-I Affiliated Stations (4) were developed by our colleagues from the Tri-Institution Network, Weill Cornell and Memorial Sloan Kettering.

RockEDU Made Stations (3) were developed by the RockEDU team and are adapted and executed by our passionate volunteers.

Rockefeller Science Stations (6) directly represent the research taking place in Rockefeller Laboratories

The Collaborative Research Center Building

Where Learning Happens

FLOOR 4	Body Builders
FLOOR 3	Light, Flight, and Innovation
FLOOR 2	NYC Eco Explorers
FLOOR 1	The Organism Observatory
FLOOR A	Learn About RU
FLOOR B	Invent, Engineer, Explore!

Complete List of Learning Stations

Body Builders

- Brain Builder
- Brain Flip
- Code Breakers
- DNA Model
- Escape the Cell
- Eyes, Vision, and Optics!
- Genotype to Phenotype
- The Brainscape
- The Science of Where You Are

Light, Flight, and Innovation

- Columbia Space Initiative
- Sci Lit with NYPL
- Optics: The Science of Light
- Robofun
- Plasma Power & Magnetic Marvels
- Making Macro-Particles!

NYC Eco Explorers

- A Taíno Past
- Battle of the Beaks
- Carbon Footprint Detective
- Go Green with Renewable Energy
- NYC eDNA Detective
- NYC Water Story
- Ocean Wonders: Sharks!
- STEAM in Bloom
- The Bee Conservancy
- Your Commute and Its Carbon Footprint

The Organism Observatory

- ANTVenture
- Bug Safari
- Build-a-Bug
- *C. elegans*
- Drugs from Dirt
- Into the Flyverse
- Mosquito Mythbusting!
- Tools of the Lab

Learn About RU

- Put Out the Fire!
- RU Research Scavenger Hunt

Invent, Engineer, Explore!

- 3, 2, 1... Lift Off!
- STEAM Works Studio
- Intrepid Space Engineering
- Sensory Room

Learning Station Spotlight: SciSat Classics

Escape the Cell: Existing almost as long as the festival has, Escape the Cell is an interactive way to learn about the flow of genetic information from DNA to RNA to protein. Held as a competition, attendees try for the fastest time to fold their proteins and escape the cell!

The Brainscape: Many students look forward to this brain dissection each year, where they can cut apart sheep brains and learn about neuroanatomy. Here, students learn about the parts of the brain and get to explore it up close by dissecting a real brain!

Tools of the Lab: This station introduces students to the many tools used in the lab, such as pipettes, balances, and beakers. Students get to interact with and use real lab equipment here, learning what it is like working in a research laboratory and how scientists think and conduct experiments.

Optics: The Science of Light: Now in its third year of many more to come, this station teaches all about optics, including basic optical physics, applied optics, and biomedical optics. Students learn how light moves with lasers, microscopes, and more!

Learning Station Spotlight: Debuted This Year

A Taíno Past: Students got to dig for artifacts, learn about soil composition and how it relates to the passage of time, and identify their findings. Here, they were also able to learn about being an archaelogist from scientists who actively go on digs.

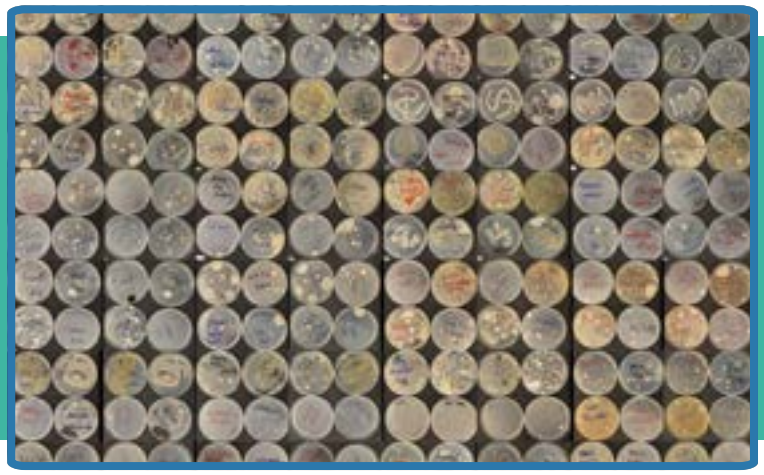
Brain Builder, The Stem Cell Station: Students learned about different types of brain cells, neurons, glia, and astrocytes, and how they come from stem cells. While stem cells can become any cell in the body, here students transformed their stem cells into different brain cells.

Making Macro-Particles: Students learned about therapeutic nanoparticles by creating their own colorful macro-particles. The macro-particles mimic the concepts behind nanoparticle design, and are a visible way to discover how scientists use chemistry to help the body.

Build-a-Bug: Here, special features of bacteria that shape how they interact with the world were explored through microscopy and bead crafting. Students learned about different features of Gram-positive, Gram-negative, and mycobacterial cell walls.

Learning Station Spotlight: By the Stats

3,2,1... Liftoff – 96 feet, 3 inches
The height that students launched paper rockets up the center of the building. After constructing a rocket entirely out of just paper and tape, they were launched with a goal of reaching the ceiling nearly 100 feet away! This station will return in 2027.



Drugs From Dirt – 260 swabs
That's how many samples were swabbed and plated to grow bacteria! Each plate in the left image has grown unique microbes from various swab locations on campus. Microbes from soil can benefit human health.

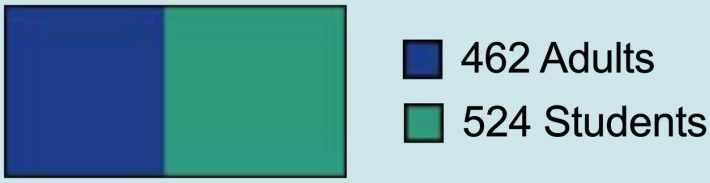
DNA Models – 20 pounds
The amount of gummy bears used to make DNA models out of candy, to learn what makes up the molecule that makes us who we are! There are four nucleotides that make up DNA and the twisting ladder shape it forms.

Battle of the Beaks – 22 birds
This is how many birds were hidden around the building for bird watching. Here, students learned how to identify birds by their beak shape and size, and how to contribute to the protection of bird populations in the city.

2025 Attendees Overview

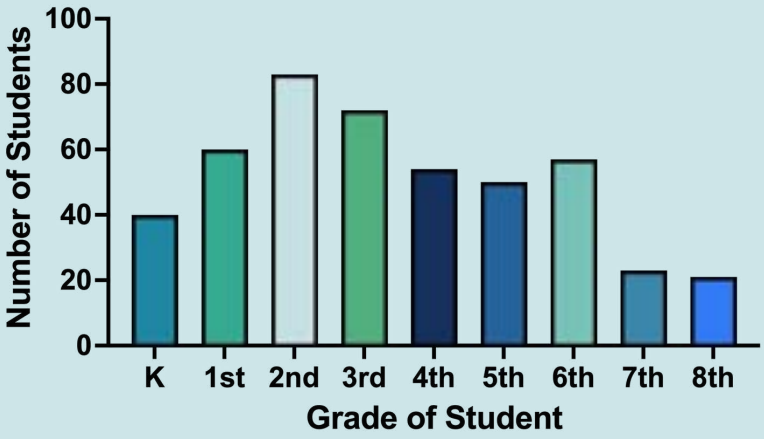
For the first time in years, we had beautiful weather! SciSat25 had almost 1,000 attendees comprised of students and their caregivers. Students came with friends, family, and student groups.

Attendee Breakdown



Of 986 attendees, there were 462 Adults and 524 Students (including Students from School and NPO Groups)

Students by School Grade



Students from grades K-8 attended the event. While last year, no grade had more than 50 students attend, this year grades 1-6 all had 50+ students attend.

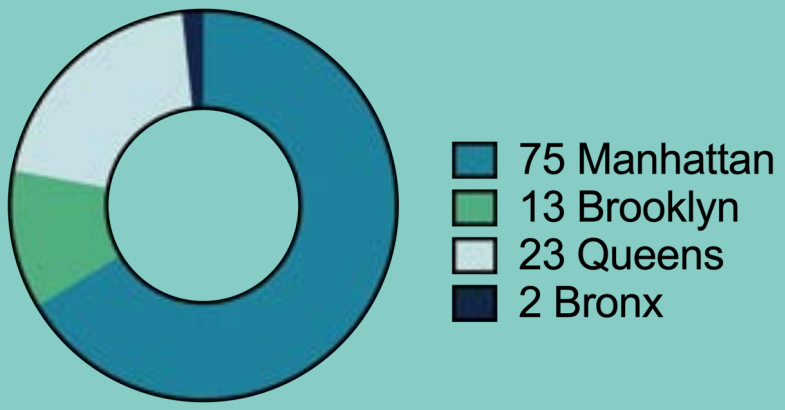
Schools and Student Groups

Three student groups attended through school and nonprofit outreach, bringing a total of 48 students from Dock Street School for STEAM Studies, Our Lady of Lourdes/Children's Scholarship Fund (returning for their second year!), and P.S. 107X in the Bronx.

There were 167 schools represented at SciSat25.

Schools in New York accounted for 140 of the schools students attend. Additionally, students visited from 17 schools in New Jersey, 10 schools in Connecticut, and 1 school in Massachusetts.

NYC Schools at SciSat25

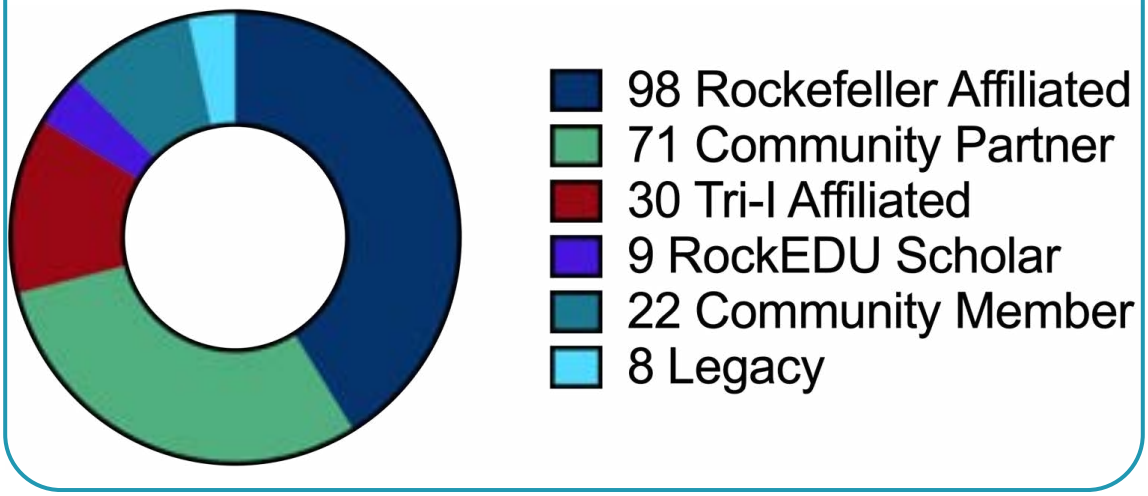


Of the 140 schools from New York, 113 are in NYC and represent four boroughs.

2025 Volunteers Overview

SciSat25 had almost 240 volunteers managing the Learning Stations, greatly exceeding the number of volunteers last year! These volunteers cover a wide array of science knowledge and expertise and shared their enthusiasm with attendees.

Volunteer Demographics



~Joining Year After Year~

We are grateful to have so many volunteers come back year after year to help with this event! While the priority is for students to have an amazing time attending, we are proud that the volunteer experience is great. Volunteers love sharing their knowledge and passion with attendees and help create the wonderful atmosphere iconic to the festival.

Volunteer Spotlight

Emily H. Emily volunteers each year with her family, and every year works at a different station. She has an intimate knowledge of so many activities because of this, and we are grateful she brings her smile and charm each year!

Lola N. Inspired by her work with mosquitoes, Lola developed Mosquito Mythbusting! with her labmates to combat myths about mosquitoes and share education about how to identify and prevent mosquitoes.

Behzad K. As an optical engineer, Behzad knows a lot about how light works, and he shares this knowledge with everyone in the Optics Learning Station. Through a variety of interactive activities, everyone can learn about light and optics.

Mia H. Bringing back a retired station based on her lab's research, Mia and her labmates shared how both humans and flies navigate their surroundings. We are so glad to have had this iconic station return to Science Saturday.

2025 Community Partners

Learning Station Leaders

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

BARNARD COLLEGE

THE BEE CONSERVANCY

COLD SPRING HARBOR LABORATORY

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

CUNY BUILDING PERFORMANCE LAB

FRANKLIN SCHOOL IN JERSEY CITY

INTREPID MUSEUM

NYC DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NYC DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE PFIZER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

ROBOFUN AND VEMNY

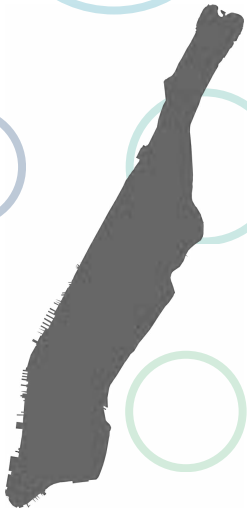
STEAM WORKS STUDIO

SUNY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

New Jersey: 2 Organizations

Queens: 1 Organization



Manhattan: 12 Organizations

Brooklyn: 2 Organizations

We would also like to thank the organizations that volunteered with us, including:

Fellow Members of the New York City STEM Education Network
Hunter College
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
NYU Langone
Students in New York City Schools
Weill Cornell Medical College

Attendee Testimonials

Year after year, attendees love coming to Science Saturday! Whether it's their first or fourth time attending, each experience is unique and fun.

"It's such a joyful, engaging experience for kids—and it's clear how much thought and care goes into every station. You're not just teaching science; you're making it feel alive and accessible."

"We're so blown away by Science Saturday. My two kids, 7 and 9, just couldn't get enough. They were engaged for the entirety of the event, from open to close. I think it was a life-changing experience that opened their eyes to the wonders of science. Thank you SO much for opening your doors to all these kids."

"This was our first time and was an eye-opening, amazing experience for my 11-yr old daughter. Being a scientist is hard to fully explain and with your help, she sees future opportunities in science professions. Thank you!"

"A major complaint I hear from my kids is that despite the event being called Science Saturday, 'It's NOT FAIR they don't do it every Saturday!'"

100% of survey respondents indicated that:

- Scientific concepts were conveyed effectively
- Hands-on activities taught new ideas and showed that science is fun
- Students gained insights into what a scientist does

Volunteer Testimonials

Our volunteers loved their time participating in Science Saturday and sharing their passions with students of all ages.

"We had such a wonderful experience at SciSat. As a community engagement-focused team, it was so valuable for us to be able to share science learning with community members in a hands-on, engaging way."

"The platform you give us to share with young kids what we love about Science is truly amazing and it's an honor to be able to take part in this amazing event"

"I had so much fun and it was truly an amazing experience discussing science with people of all ages. This event brought me so much hope and re-sparked my desire to be involved with science outreach."

"I was amazed by how much kids enjoyed things that seem so simple to us, spending so much time with them and truly finding them fun. It was also great to see parents appreciating the same things as their kids, sometimes they were just as surprised as the children. It's really cool to see."

When asked how likely they'd be to recommend participating in this event to a colleague, their average ranking was 9.8/10!