The California Science Center is pleased to provide special insights to our generous supporters, Members and donors. Here's what's in this issue of The Nucleus:

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Science Center family, we hope that you and your loved ones are safe, healthy and continuing to learn. During these incredibly difficult times, your vital support enables the California Science Center to continue our mission to inspire science learning in everyone. As we adapt to challenges and find new ways to serve the community with educational programming and exhibits, we reaffirm our commitment to the Science Center's core values of accessibility and inclusiveness that are at the heart of everything we do.

THANK YOU!

GET TO KNOW THE SCIENCE CENTER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL - MEET VICTOR!

We are delighted to welcome Victor Sanchez, new principal of the Dr. Theodore T. Alexander, Jr. Science Center School, to our California Science Center family! A partnership between the California Science Center and the Los Angeles Unified School District since 2004, the Alexander Science Center School is a neighborhood elementary charter school that provides a science-rich
curriculum to more than 650 children from economically challenged communities surrounding Exposition Park.

While Victor may be new to the Alexander Science Center School, he is a native of Los Angeles who grew up in the Exposition Park community and never left. In fact, he now lives just five blocks from the Science Center.

After attending neighborhood schools, Victor became an educator and school administrator with a lengthy and distinguished career working in local schools like 93rd Street Elementary where he served as principal during the past six years transforming the school into a STEAM magnet and dual language center.

Given his background, one might even say that Victor was destined to become principal of the Alexander Science Center School. Victor fondly remembers the countless hours he spent as a child exploring the California Science Center when it was previously the Museum of Science and Industry. “Coming to the Science Center saved me as a kid from bad influences,” Victor reminisces.

In addition, Victor had the opportunity to meet Dr. Theodore T. Alexander, Jr., the school’s namesake, and considers him an influential mentor. Dr. Alexander was an associate superintendent of the LAUSD who was noted for leading the district’s desegregation efforts. “I always wanted to honor Dr. Alexander by working in the school named after him.”

Victor recalls how science played an important role in helping him excel academically. As a child, he and his friends immersed themselves in building pinball machines from scrap lumber and discarded items. At the time it was fun, but Victor realizes today that the project was a transformative experience because it required trial and error, observation and collaboration – all elements of the scientific method. “It taught me how to think, solve problems and explain my thinking in everything I do.” That is why Victor believes that teaching science as an integrated curriculum is critical to helping children in underserved communities succeed academically.

As the new principal, Victor has high expectations for what the Alexander Science Center School can achieve with a science-based curriculum. He demonstrates this by wearing a lab coat to school every day. His goal for the next five years is to integrate science instruction into every hour of the school day. He envisions students working together in small groups, taking ownership of their projects and communicating with each other while teachers act as facilitators. “Kids should have a regular opportunity to talk and explain their thinking and provide...”
During the pandemic, while instruction takes place virtually, Victor has been busy preparing the Alexander Science Center School for reopening and truly looks forward to the day when he is able to welcome back his students. Virtual classes may be essential for the time being but, Victor notes, "the pandemic has demonstrated that kids need to interact with their teachers." Automation and online classrooms cannot take the place of in-person instruction.

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When he is not working, Victor enjoys spending time with his family and taking long walks outdoors in the early morning hours. But he admits that finding new resources for his students is always on his mind because giving kids, like himself, the opportunity to succeed is his mission. "Teaching kids is my focus in life."

Ultimately, his goal is to equip his students with leadership and decision-making skills that are essential in the 21st century and he believes that the problem-solving skills of the scientific method are key to accomplishing this goal.

The California Science Center will also play a very important role in helping Victor’s educational goals for the students become a reality. The Science Center’s Education Department staff regularly provide professional development training to the Alexander Science Center School’s teachers to hone their skills in science instruction. Most recently, the school’s charter mission and vision statement were used to facilitate a schoolwide reflection on the role of science in the entire school curriculum. The long-term objective is to support teachers in the adoption of best practices to create a whole new science curriculum roadmap.

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The California Science Center's doors may be closed, but our mission of science learning for EVERYONE continues! This holiday season, please consider making an additional gift to the California Science Center Foundation, beyond your Membership contribution.

Your generous contribution will help us maintain essential operations like on-site animal care, provide FREE science learning resources online and develop quality virtual education programs for students, teachers and families – while making careful preparations to reopen to the public when it is safe to do so.

And, this year the federal CARES Act provides increased tax incentives for charitable giving for both individuals and corporations. (Visit IRS.gov or consult your tax advisor for more information.)

With the Science Center's unprecedented closure due to COVID-19 extending beyond nine months, reliable revenue streams are scarce and we need your support now more than ever. To learn more about giving options, please call the Development Office at (213) 744-2035. Thank you in advance!
Missing your visits to the California Science Center? Science Beyond the Center gives you behind-the-scenes access to Science Center exhibits in ways you’ve never seen before.

This week, do you ever wonder why our galaxy is a spiral? Hear from the Science Center’s Air and Space Exhibit Project Manager, Devin Waller, who takes on this exciting question that was submitted by a listener. Devin will be joining the show as co-host for the next few episodes, which will focus on space exploration!

You can also take tours through Space Shuttle Endeavour. Experience revealing behind-the-scenes interactions with our animals, the people who take care of them and the systems that help us keep them healthy. And check out some videos from our traveling exhibitions. New content will be added regularly.

Bookmark the Science Beyond the Center page and check back often to see what's new!

EXPLORASTORE DISCOUNT AND CURBSIDE PICKUP

Need last minute gifts for the scientist in your household? How about some cool toys and experiment kits!

For a limited time, same day curbside pickup of ExploraStore purchases is available within 2 hours from order confirmation between 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Pacific time, Monday through Saturday only. Curbside pickup will not be available December 25 and 26.

Members and other generous supporters receive 10% off all web orders through December 31 as well as free shipping on all orders $50 and over. Use promo code: MemberFall10 at checkout.
VIRTUAL BACKGROUNDS

Download and use these free virtual backgrounds featuring some of our favorite scenes from the California Science Center during your video conference meetings.

Get ready to launch into a new year with this dynamic Space Shuttle Endeavour lift off image!

Download

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND SUPPORT SCIENCE LEARNING FOR EVERYONE

During these challenging and uncertain times, your support as a Member is critical to our ability to continue serving our community with free online science learning opportunities.

Please renew your Membership today in support of our mission to inspire science learning in everyone.

If your Membership is not due for renewal and you are in a position to make an additional gift, of any amount, we invite your contribution.

Your generous support will help sustain the California Science Center as a trusted educational resource while we are temporarily closed to the public. Thank you!

Plan today, make a difference tomorrow.

Because you value science as much as we do, help us continue our mission by leaving a gift in your will to the California Science Center. Did you know that supporting the Science Center with a gift from your IRA is tax-free? For more information send us an email.
For more information on the California Science Center, visit our website at www.californiasciencecenter.org or call (323) SCIENCE (724-3623). For Membership questions, please contact the Membership Office at member@californiasciencecenter.org or call (213) 744-7504.

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