

**News Inside:**

**ANNOUNCING \$10 MILLION  
IN ENHANCEMENTS**

**NEW EXHIBITS AND  
EXPERIENCES**

**PROVIDING GREATER ACCESS  
TO MORE MARYLANDERS**



# ExploRations

**Winter 2024**

**A Publication of the Maryland Science Center**



## Transforming our Future



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FROM THE PRESIDENT’S OFFICE

Our Future is Now

Next year, the Maryland Science Center will begin a year-long celebration of our 50th anniversary. In June 1976, our Inner Harbor building opened as the first museum, the first attraction, and the first new public institution in the Inner Harbor renaissance. Our museum is the vision of the board members of the Maryland Academy of Sciences, our parent organization, to see beyond the moment. They aspired for something grander for our city and state. They developed the plan and took the action to bring science to life through our wonderful structure of bricks and mortar.

Over the past decades, we’ve embraced new technology and introduced new scientific discoveries. And as our visitors' preferences have changed, we’ve changed with them. We’ve created new exhibits, such as *Math in Nature*, *Science Aglow*, and *You - The Inside Story presented by Johns Hopkins Medicine*. Our enhanced experiences, such as Homeschool Week, continue to sell out as we respond to changes in how families learn. We built the *St. John Properties IMAX Theater* - and then digitized it when that technology was available.

But we can’t rest on those laurels. Our community demands ever-changing informal science experiences. For us, science is a verb. We embrace “Let’s Science.” It’s thinking with your head, working with your hands, and making discoveries about everything under the sun and beyond. Because science is always unfolding, we have an obligation to present to our community the most updated, energizing, and thoughtful experiences in our Inner Harbor building and across the state.

That’s what we’re always doing. We’re transforming our future.

Over the next two years, we’ll be making \$10 million in enhancements to our experience by introducing new exhibits, expanding access to our programs, and enhancing our commitment to the environment. It’s all part of our mission to create a community that celebrates the fun and importance of science.

The Maryland Science Center is the largest provider of informal science education in Maryland. Through our new initiatives, we will reach more students and families and impact more communities. The pages of this issue of *Explorations* are filled with the details of our exciting plans. I encourage you to read on.

You are part of our community and our future. It is only through your generosity that we can implement our transformation and fulfill the full potential of what’s to come. In this season of gratitude and giving, I invite you to celebrate your love of science with a gift to our annual campaign.

I look forward to celebrating our future with you in the coming years. Best wishes for a joyous holiday season.



Mark J. Potter  
President and CEO

Enjoy a Wintry Mix of Fun this  
Holiday Season

BRRRR! - as in, Be Ready to Really Revel in a Riot of Recreation over the holidays. We’ve got a blizzard of winter wonders waiting for you during *Snow Days*, Saturday, December 21 through Wednesday, January 1.

What’s the forecast?

*Winter Wonders:* Fun, hands-on activities throughout the museum will include toboggan racing, a snowman engineering challenge, a fantastic frosty bubbles spectacle, exploding hot cocoa, snowflake crafts, indoor "ice skating" (wear your socks!) and an indoor snow machine.

*Midnight Noon:* It’s time to party - and that time is noon on New Year’s Eve! Families with children too young for the midnight festivities will celebrate the new year from 10 AM to 2 PM on December 31 with loads of festive activities, a singalong with *Rainbow Rock Band*, and the countdown at noon for our infamous ball drop.

*Gingerbread Village:* Add your creative cardboard creation to the Gingerbread Village in *The Shed*.



*Kids Room:* For our youngest visitors - get active with penguin bowling and investigate snowy animal tracks in our space created just for you!

*STEM Workshops:* Get creative, build, and learn at eight different workshops - everything from making slime to learning about circuits, to exploring engineering and forensics. Advance registration is required, and workshops are not included with admission. Information and registration is available at [www.mdsci.org/stem-workshops](http://www.mdsci.org/stem-workshops).

Check out all the holiday festivities at [www.mdsci.org/snow-days](http://www.mdsci.org/snow-days).

Welcoming  
Senator Cory  
McCray to  
the Board

We’re delighted to announce that Maryland State Senator Cory McCray has been elected to the Maryland Science Center Board of Trustees.



Born and raised in Baltimore City, Senator McCray is committed to supporting students, families and communities. He has spearheaded the passage of over 100 pieces of legislation to bring greater resources and equity to Baltimore and Maryland, including initiatives that mirror the Maryland Science Center’s priorities for greater access to educational institutions and environmental stewardship.

Says Senator McCray, “Growing up in Baltimore, visits to the Maryland Science Center were a cornerstone of my early education, sparking curiosity that stays with me today. Now, as a father of four, sharing this treasure with my children is deeply meaningful. Being part of the board is about more than service—it’s a commitment to preserving and expanding this resource, empowering future generations to explore boldly and understand the world around them.”

We are the Maryland Science Center.  
We inspire. We empower. We engage.  
Let’s science



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# Inspire, Empower, and Engage



## Announcing \$10 Million in Enhancements

Science is about exploring, imagining and learning. It’s about exciting minds, encouraging investigation, and improving our world. At the Maryland Science Center, that means ensuring that our programs, access, and visitor experiences continue to inspire, empower, and engage Marylanders - today and for years to come.

As we approach our 50th anniversary next year, the Maryland Science Center is making \$10+ million of enhancements to the visitor experience, facilities, and our hands-on programs that make our unique brand of hands-on science education so special. This investment is the largest renovation to our Inner Harbor anchor institution in 20 years.

These significant enhancements were announced to our partners, supporters, elected officials and team members at a celebratory event on October 9. As president and CEO Mark J. Potter noted during the announcement, ***“As we prepare to celebrate our 50th anniversary next year, we’re making sure that our content and our experiences remain accessible, wide-ranging, and relevant to the next generation of explorers and leaders. We want to provide them with the engaging, hands-on moments of learning that encourage them to ask “why,” the support to explore new ideas and options, and the joy of making discoveries and connections, so they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to take full advantage of their future and their world.”***



Our fundraising work for these projects is not done – our work continues. To date we’ve raised three-quarters of our initial \$10 million+ investment for these enhancements from public and private sources. We invite you to join us on this journey to make sure that the Maryland Science Center continues to inspire, empower, and engage for years to come. For more information or to donate to the 50th Anniversary Campaign, please contact Marty Perreault, Senior Development Director, at 410-545-5970 and mperreault@mdsci.org.



## Enhancing Visitor Experiences - and Creating New Ones!

As part of the Maryland Science Center’s historic \$10+ million investment, visitors will soon enjoy exciting new exhibits, more spaces for intergenerational, hands-on exploration, and enhanced experiences that spark curiosity and encourage experimentation.

### New Space Exhibit

In late 2025, a new, 5,000 square foot exhibit about space exploration will replace the *Our Place in Space* exhibit on the second floor. Sponsored by The Northrop Grumman Foundation, the exhibit will feature dozens of interactive components that encourage visitors to ask probing questions as they consider their possible future life beyond earth. What if we can travel to other planets? What would the challenges be and how can we overcome them? What do we need to know about living somewhere other than on our home planet?

And they’ll do it in the unique Maryland Science Center way - hands-on, collaborative, and fun. Visitors will simulate landing futuristic spacecraft, manipulate robotic arms to perform tasks “in space,” and explore how humans might react to gravity on different planets. Updated images and videos from the Webb Space Telescope and rocket launches will also be displayed on a huge video wall.

### Expanded Maker Space

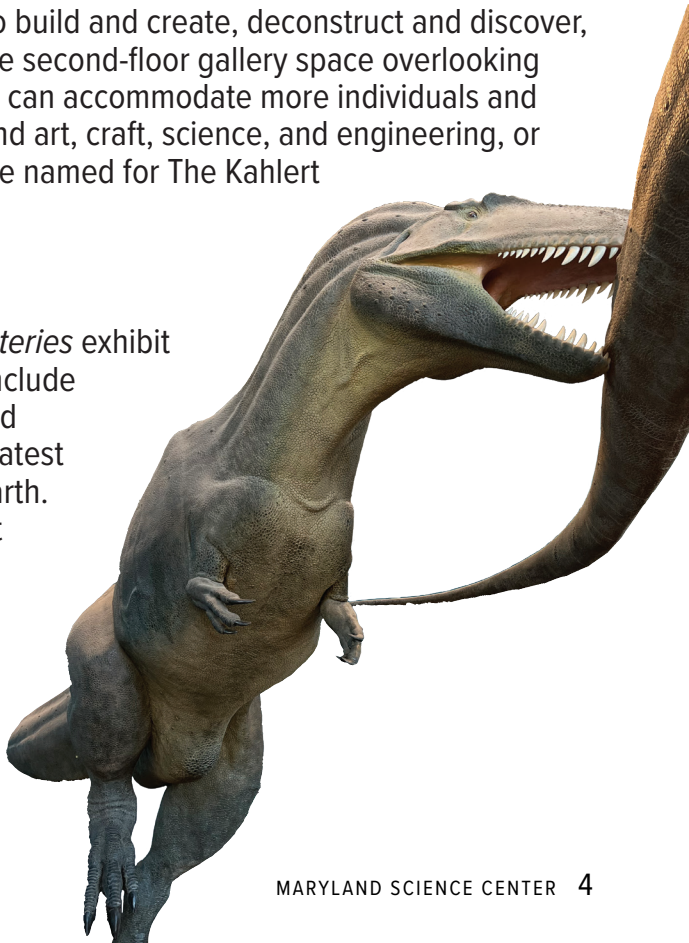
Young tinkerers and their families will have more opportunities to build and create, deconstruct and discover, when the popular *Shed* makerspace relocates and expands to the second-floor gallery space overlooking the Inner Harbor. The new *Shed* will feature 36 workstations that can accommodate more individuals and group activities, such as introductions to tools, activities that blend art, craft, science, and engineering, or creating a prototype for an inventive object. The new *Shed* will be named for The Kahlert Foundation, which made a \$1 million gift to the Science Center.

### Updating Dinosaur Mysteries

It’s been 20 years since our widely loved first floor *Dinosaur Mysteries* exhibit opened - and it’s time for it to be refreshed. Improvements will include new hands-on components, new technology, clearer graphics and enhanced lighting. We’ll be adding new content to highlight the latest understanding of these fascinating creatures who roamed our Earth. Don’t worry - the 12 huge dinosaurs throughout the exhibit aren’t going anywhere!

### More Demonstration Space

A new, larger Demonstration Stage on the third floor will accommodate more visitors in a flexible space, meaning that our guests will enjoy more of the educator-led science explorations they love during their visits.





# Inspire, Empower, and Engage



## Improving Access for all Marylanders

*The Maryland Science Center is a valuable resource and source of inspiration for Marylanders. That's why, as a part of our \$10+ million in enhancements, we're significantly expanding our initiatives that help all of our neighbors have experiences that inspire and educate them, no matter their location or circumstances.*

### Access Science

This past summer, we piloted a new initiative that will now become a regular opportunity. *Access Science* enables anyone with a Maryland SNAP or Maryland WIC card to purchase a Science Center admission ticket on the weekend or during the summer, for \$5 per person. It's anticipated that when this program is fully funded it will accommodate over 20,000 visitors a year – 20,000 children and their families who might otherwise not be able to visit.

### Free Field Trip Admission

Maryland school children are also benefiting from our commitment to greater access. For years, our *Science Beyond the Classroom Powered by Constellation* program has allowed Maryland students and teachers to visit the Science Center on field trips each year – over 85,000 last year alone. Thanks to a renewed commitment from The Constellation Foundation, this vital program will extend to 2030. Thanks to Constellation Foundation and our other generous donors who help make this possible, that means that hundreds of thousands of future scientists, engineers, and leaders will fill our halls and explore our hands-on experiences on field trips - for free.

### MSC Across Maryland

More Marylanders across the state will experience our informal, hands-on brand of STEM education through our new *MSC Across Maryland* program. Our educators and Science Center vans full of experiments and demonstrations will be in every county. We won't just participate in events like festivals and fairs - we will BE the event. This program is not a replacement for our current Traveling Science Program, which visits every county in Maryland for at least three days of school programming every year, but rather an enhancement enabling us to reach the entire community.

## Prioritizing our Environment

*As Maryland's largest provider of informal science education, it is imperative that the Maryland Science Center practice what we preach - or teach. As we introduce our visitors to the importance of understanding and preserving our environment, we must do the same.*

And we will. Our \$10+ million in enhancements will add elements to our Inner Harbor building that will reduce our impact on the environment - and invite our visitors to join our efforts.



The Maryland Science Center's harbor-side plaza will be transformed into an inviting, engaging, and educational green space. Hard surfaces will be replaced with native plants and reclaimed paving and create a shade canopy over a sloping lawn. Improved water management will reduce our impact on the Chesapeake Bay. And, because we're always educators, pathway markers will introduce visitors to Maryland scientists and scientific discoveries. Our new entrance will be friendly and welcoming- for our visitors and for our environment.

Similar renovations will occur at the Constellation Learning Entrance on the Key Highway side of the building, with more grass, more natural surfaces, and more shade.

In addition, the first project of our planned enhancements has already been completed: replacement of our original air handling system, creating a more comfortable environment while improving the building's energy efficiency. This \$2 million project was made possible through a grant from the State of Maryland.





## Your Support Makes a Difference

Maryland Science Center programs have an impact on the lives of students - and your support has an impact on the Maryland Science Center.

In this season of generosity, your end-of-year gift to the Maryland Science Center will:

- Provide FREE admission to every Maryland student and teacher on school field trip.
- Bring hands-on science experiences to students and families in every Maryland county through our outreach programs.
- Encourage visitors to question, explore and solve problems in our fascinating exhibits and experiences.
- Support educators as they incorporate engaging, curriculum-aligned experiences in their classrooms.

Visit [www.mdsci.org/donate](http://www.mdsci.org/donate) to make your gift today.

Thank you!

## Outstanding Young Scientist and Outstanding Young Engineer Nominations Now Open

The Maryland Science Center fosters creativity, exploration and discovery. Our annual STEM Awards honor scientists, engineers, educators, and students who share that commitment and have achieved noteworthy success as they pursue their passions.

Nominations are now open for the 2025 Maryland Outstanding Young Scientist (OYS) and Outstanding Young Engineer (OYE) awards. Entries are encouraged for qualified professionals in a variety of STEM fields and work environments, including academic, industrial, government agencies, and private businesses.

Nominees must be Maryland residents, and aged 35 or younger for the OYS award and 40 or younger for the OYE award. Nominations close on February 21, 2025. Members of the Science Center's Scientific and Educational Advisory Council will review the applications, and the winners will be honored at the annual STEM Awards ceremony on May 15, 2025.

Details and nomination forms are available at [www.mdsci.org/oys-oye](http://www.mdsci.org/oys-oye).

The STEM awards ceremony in May will also include the presentations of the Maryland Outstanding STEM Educator Award to an educator who creatively engages students in scientific exploration, and the Dr. H. Bentley Glass Scholarship to a Baltimore City public school senior who intends to pursue STEM studies upon graduation.



## A Tribute to Mary Hyman



Loyola University Maryland/Nick Alexopoulos, '03, MBA '16

In September, the Maryland Science Center lost one of our most dedicated friends and advocates: Mary Hyman, who passed away at the age of 97.

Mary's commitment to, and involvement in, the Science Center was far-reaching. She was Director of Education from 1976 to 1990, an active member of our Board of Trustees, a long-time member of our Scientific Council, and a generous donor.

"Mary modeled how to bring expertise from outside the Maryland Science Center to complement the programs created by staff," says Pete Yancone, Senior Educator who worked with Mary during her entire tenure at the Maryland Science Center. "University faculty and researchers responded to her call to become part of planning and delivering MSC classes, workshops, or programs. Her Rolodex of phone contacts cross-referenced by specialization was deemed so valuable that someone always took it from her desk during fire drill evacuations."

Mary took pride in recognizing new, "pre-relevant" areas of thought in science education that were ripe for a science center team to pioneer a meaningful learning experience before formal education organizations might be prepared to implement. For example, she established a partnership with the Johns Hopkins University and the burgeoning Center for Talented Youth to develop weekend seminars on college campuses for middle and high school students. The project grew national in scope, as Mary organized summer residential classes across the country. These programs served the needs of school systems with gifted and talented students before they could prepare teachers or create programs to advance those students.

This forward-looking and boundary-pushing approach changed the science learning landscape.

Shortly after the Science Center opened in 1976, Mary convinced a program officer at the National Science Foundation to observe MSC's initial early childhood program. Even though there was no NSF Directorate tasked with supporting early learning, Mary and the Maryland Science Center secured the agency's first-ever grant awarded to a science education program for preschoolers. Those funds enabled MSC staff to develop curriculum, materials, and procedures for young children and their teachers to experience basic concepts of science in a model that was replicated in other science centers around the country.

"Mary left a lasting and important legacy at the Maryland Science Center," according to President and CEO Mark J. Potter. "The NSF grant for Pre-K programming laid the groundwork for what would become our Kid's Room. The thousands of Scouts who have spent the night at MSC as part of our Camp-In owe their experience to Mary, who began the program in the early 1980s. Mary was truly a Science Center institution. Her creativity and initiative continue to inspire us."

Says Tim Armbruster, former president of the Baltimore Community Foundation and The Goldseker Foundation, and a longtime friend and advisor to Mary, "Mary was passionate about the crucial need for the general public, but especially for future generations of students, to share her excitement about science education and scientific literacy. Her work, generous annual financial support, and significant legacy gift to the Maryland Science Center illustrate her lifelong commitment."

With her husband Sig, Mary recognized and supported the impact of the informal science education and the Maryland Science Center. We are proud that our Sci-Zone classrooms bear their names.

Following her position as our Director of Education, Mary coordinated science education programs and the Institute for Child Care Education at Loyola University Maryland.

We are saddened by Mary's death but are grateful for her steadfast and heartfelt commitment to our work.

## Remembering Richard Eliasberg



For over 50 years, Richard Eliasberg was committed to the work of the Maryland Science Center. He was a Trustee of the Maryland Academy of Sciences (and the Maryland Science Center) from 1973 to 1990, served as Chairman of the Board from 1985 to 1987, and was responsible for arranging the financing and construction of the IMAX Theater. Richard passed away in October at the age of 92.

As a leader and supporter, Richard inspired the Board and staff to plan for the future. That legacy continues today as we plan new enhancements to our Inner Harbor location and expand access to our programs. Through his graciousness, generosity, and guidance, Richard provided an example and inspiration we continue to follow.



# A Busy Fall for All

*For Homeschoolers:* Twice a year, hundreds of homeschool families enjoy a week of activities created just for them, including enrichment programs, workshops, and shows in the St. John Properties IMAX Theater and Davis Planetarium. The next Homeschool Program will be Tuesdays in February (the 4th, 11th, 25th). Registration is available at [www.mdsci.org/homeschool](http://www.mdsci.org/homeschool).



*For Teachers:* Educators from across Maryland celebrated their love of science at our *Teachers' Night Out* in October. With libation in hand, they explored our exhibits, connected with colleagues, and learned how Maryland Science Center field trips and outreach programs can enhance their students' science experiences. This free teacher appreciation event is sure to become a yearly hit!

*For Adults:* It's not just kids and families who love the Maryland Science Center. Our adult programs enthrall and inspire grown-ups! In September, our adult guests enjoyed Quidditch Catapults, TriWizard Tournament challenges, a Potions class with a drinkable color-changing cocktail, and wizard themed snack and wine pairings at *Wizards and Wine*.



*For Fun:* Our annual post-Halloween *Pumpkin Smash* tradition continued as Science Center visitors witnessed the splatter and spatter as their gooey gourds were launched from our rooftop terrace to the Harbor promenade four-stories below (and maybe learned something about velocity, acceleration and mass in the process!).



## Do Try This at Home

### Snowflake Window Clings

#### Collect:

- White glue
- Dish soap
- Bowl
- Parchment Paper
- Food coloring or glitter (optional)

#### Mix it.

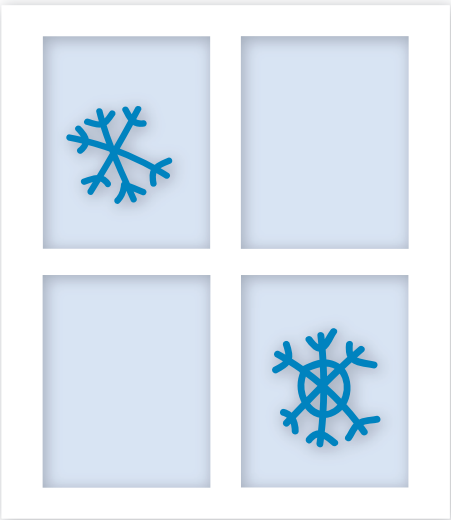
1. Add 2 tablespoons of glue and 2 drops of dish soap to a bowl. Mix them together with a paint brush.
2. Mix in a drop or two of food coloring if you want to make your snowflakes colorful.

#### Paint it.

3. On a piece of parchment paper, spread globs of the glue mixture out into snowflake shapes. If you don't have parchment paper, a plastic page protector or thin produce bag will work just as well.
4. Add food coloring or glitter to make your snowflakes glisten as the sunlight comes through your window.
5. Allow the snowflakes to dry overnight.

#### Stick it!

6. Gently peel the snowflakes away from the parchment.
7. Stick them to your window to make it look like a winter wonderland!



#### How does it work?

Your homemade window cling art works in the same way as vinyl window decals. The flexible shape acts like a suction cup against the smooth surface of the window. This cohesive force between the glass and glue shape keeps the snowflakes sticking to the window long after the snow stops falling.

Visit [www.mdsci.org/science-at-home](http://www.mdsci.org/science-at-home) for additional science at home adventures!







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help ensure that Maryland school  
children and their teachers can  
continue to access the best  
hands-on science programming.  
Visit [www.mdsci.org/donate](http://www.mdsci.org/donate) to  
make your gift today.

Thank you for your support!

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Maryland Science Center.*

*Visit [www.mdsci.org](http://www.mdsci.org)*

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we're doing.  
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### Snow Days: Special Holiday Week Events

*Tuesday, December 24 - Wednesday, January 1*  
Details inside about how to have a blast at the  
blizzard of winter wonders over the holidays.

### Holiday Hours:

Christmas Eve, December 24: 10am - 3pm

Christmas Day, December 25: Closed

December 26 - 30: 10am - 5pm

New Year's Eve, December 31: 10am - 4pm

New Year's Day, January 1: 10am - 4pm