



MARYLAND SCIENCE CENTER ANNOUNCES 2026 STEM AWARD WINNERS

Outstanding Young Scientist, Educator, and Baltimore City Student Honored

The Maryland Science Center presented its annual STEM awards honoring scientific research, teaching excellence, and academic achievement at a celebratory ceremony on April 29, 2026.

The 2026 STEM Award recipients are:

Outstanding Young Scientist: Dr. Gagandeep Anand, Senior Staff Scientist, Space Telescope Science Institute

Outstanding STEM Educator: Dr. Sylven Beck, Associate Professor, Curriculum and Pedagogy, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University

Dr. H. Bentley Glass Scholarship Recipient: Keiser Powell, Senior, Coppin Academy High School

“The mission of the Maryland Science Center is to encourage and support the process and joy of the scientific process,” said Mark J. Potter, President and CEO of the Maryland Science Center. “This year’s honorees exemplify that goal. They are role models for other young professionals, educators, and students, and we are honored to shine a light on their successes.”

Said Mollie Thompson, Chair of the Scientific Council, “Maryland and our region continue to attract and cultivate some of the world’s leading scientists and engineers. These awards should remind our winners — and all STEM professionals and students in the state — that their work is valued.”

Outstanding Young Scientist (OYS)

The OYS award is bestowed on a professional age 35 or younger who works in academia or 40 or younger for those in other sectors. Honorees are selected by members of the Maryland Science Center’s Scientific and Education Advisory Council.

Dr. Gagandeep Anand, Senior Staff Scientist, Space Telescope Science Institute

Dr. Anand's field of expertise is near-field cosmology, the study of the structure and evolution of the universe using galaxies in our own cosmic backyard. His most significant efforts have been focused on working to resolve the discrepancy between the predicted expansion rate of the universe and what is directly observed (the so-called "Hubble tension") and studying the star-formation and clustering properties of nearby galaxies.

Outstanding STEM Educator

The Outstanding STEM Educator award is presented to an educator or organization supporting the Maryland Science Center as it fulfills its mission to inspire, empower, and engage students in informal STEM education.

Dr. Sylven Beck, Director, Elementary Education Program, Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
Graduate School of Education & Human Development, George Washington University

For over 30 years, graduate students in Dr. Beck's STEM Teaching Methods class have participated in Maryland Science Center workshops highlighting informal STEM teaching. These experiences enrich the value of field trips as the students prepare to become classroom teachers. Over 300 future teachers, many working in school systems across the region, have benefitted from Dr. Beck's encouraging guidance and connection to informal STEM experiences.

Dr. H. Bentley Glass Scholarship

The Dr. H. Bentley Glass Scholarship is awarded to a Baltimore City high school student who intends to pursue STEM studies in college.

Keiser Powell, Senior, Coppin Academy High School

Keiser is preparing for a future in the tech industry by building skills, pursuing competitive programs, and planning pathways towards becoming a cybersecurity analyst or AI developer. His algebra teacher describes him as focused and diligent, ambitious, confident and resilient. Keister will attend Hampton University in the Fall.

The April 29 ceremony at the Maryland Science Center was sponsored by Johns Hopkins University Whiting School of Engineering and TransAmerica.