The Role of Informal Learning Institutions in K-12 Education

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The Orlando Science Center

Mission: Inspire science learning for life

Vision: Have a lasting impact on education and economic value in Central Florida by being the pre-eminent science and technology partner

Key Strategic Goals:
- Focus on science concepts and applications most relevant to the community
- Expand partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions
- Extend audience reach both on-site and off-site
Central Florida's Premiere Cultural Entity & Community Resource

- Highest attended cultural venue in region
  - averaging 300,000 participants each year
- One of 4% of museums nationwide accredited by the American Assoc. of Museums
- 60,000 hours volunteered in 2008, more than double that of the average large science center
- Over 35 active educational partnerships with schools, universities, corporations and other non-profits
OSC K-12 Educational Offerings

- Research shows that 80% of what a K-12 student learns happens outside of the formal classroom.
- The mission of the OSC K-12 Educational Offerings is to enhance, support and extend formal education about science and technology through informal science methodologies.
- Programs primarily serve teachers and K-12 students in public and private schools in the seven counties (Orange, Polk, Volusia, Seminole, Brevard, Lake and Osceola).
OSC Fieldtrip Experience

- Two-hour, all-day and multiple visit school programs
- OSC Field Trip Experience offers 29 different grade appropriate, subject-themed exploration activities in the exhibit halls
- 15 teacher-guided experimental OSC Discovery Labs
- Large format films, planetarium shows and Darden Theatre Live Shows!
OSC Offsite Programming

OSC has developed off-site programming that provides:

- Academic support and reinforcement towards the benchmarks set forth by the Florida Department of Education (DOE)
- Activities aligned with Florida’s Sunshine State Standards (SSS)
- Programs that focus on Math, Science and Astronomy content areas by facilitating various Classroom Workshops and Presentations, and OSC Family Fun Night activities
OSC Home School

- OSC offers parent-teacher access to the Teacher Resource Center at OSC
- Discovery Labs and Dr. Dare’s Lab provide laboratory resources not otherwise available to the home school community
- Home school sessions are four hours long including a 60-90 minute discovery lab, and are provided every 2nd Monday of the month
- These classes are designed to support the science curricula involved with K-12 Education
OSC Educational Technology

OSC uses technology and scientific visualization to help students better understand the world around them. These experiences include:

- the Digital Planet presentation that focuses on global energy usage and Climate change
- Science on a Sphere (SOS) which provides an in-depth view into the solar system
- The Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM), which is used to perform various biological and forensic science experiments
- Dr. Dare’s Lab allows for hands-on science experiments through educational technology.
OSC Educational Partnerships

OSC is seeking to be “an essential resource to K-12 teachers and students”. By developing partnerships with teachers, higher educating bodies and other external stakeholders; OSC will establish:

- Assessment tools that measure the Science Center’s impact on the teaching and learning process
- Long-lasting relationships that provide necessary academic support for K-12 students
- Content and funding support for “career focused” programming
OSC Educational Partnerships (cont.)

OSC is proud to develop mutually beneficial educational partnerships and corporate sponsorships that provide student accessibility from the following partners:

WORKFORCE CENTRAL FLORIDA (WCF)

SIEMENS

The Orlando Utilities Company (OUC)

Florida Space Grant Consortium

AT&T

Seminole State College

University of Central Florida

Lockheed Martin
OSC Science Ambassador Committee

The goal of this committee is strategic to the OSC educational programming and the future of education at Orlando Science Center. Here are some of the opportunities and benefits of the Science Ambassador Committee:

– Contribution to future OSC educational mission advancement
– Collaboration on new program design and development
– Insight on upcoming projects and exhibits
– Networking with other educators and administrators in the Central Florida area
The Central Florida Community seeks to increase its stake in industries that have a positive impact on the world we live in, which are fueled by a strong educational system that emphasizes Science and Math Education. There is a national scale crisis in the production of future knowledge workers, and one solution is to create interest in these careers among children at a young age. OSC is committed to providing the spark necessary to inspire the next Scientist or Engineer...
Thank You!!

For additional information, please visit us on the worldwide web at www.osc.org or by giving me a call at (407) 514-2073 or e-mail knixon@osc.org