



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR SCIENCE NEWS

Weaving connections among teachers, students & science in the Bay Area

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Newsletter, Fall 2015

## Science is on the Upswing

*"Through lesson plans, volunteer scientists, and science resources for teachers, CRS brings high-quality science experiences to my students. CRS enriches my classroom, strengthens my content knowledge, and renews my enthusiasm for science!"*

This feedback from an Oakland teacher is both heartening and representative of the comments we receive each year in our program evaluations. And the trend is clear: science teaching and learning are on the upswing in local classrooms.

More teachers and schools than ever are joining CRS and requesting support to help them teach more science (and engineering) – everything from finding field trips or grants, to lesson planning, to customized on-site workshops for teachers. Over 1,500 teachers in more than 130 schools across multiple districts are now part of the CRS membership network!

*"CRS has put life back into the science curriculum in my class."  
-Oakland Teacher*

This school year, the pace of emails, phone calls, and requests to CRS is up significantly, indicating the momentum toward more STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) in elementary classrooms is strong.



Students get excited for a hands-on science experiment

At CRS we believe all students deserve the opportunity to build on their natural curiosity about the world through high quality science learning experiences. Now, with the adoption of new standards in science, math, and English language arts, teachers are discovering the powerful ways to harness intrinsically engaging hands-on investigations in science and engineering to support skill development in reading, writing, math, and above all, critical thinking and communicating.

The jump in CRS membership shows us how teachers and schools value our support of their science planning and implementation. Our goal is to make it easier for teachers to bring great science learning experiences to their classrooms. We do this by providing timely information, on-call planning, free events, and of course our flagship Bay Area Scientists in Schools (BASIS) program.

Last year more than 80% of CRS member teachers said that as a result of CRS support and programs they added more science experiences (field trips, lessons, in-class programs) and became more enthusiastic, motivated, and confident teaching science. And, more teachers have met the best-practices set out in our Science Super Star Challenge, earning recognition (and prizes!) for excellence in elementary science.

## Year 5: Celebrating Science Super Star Teachers

This school year marks the 5th year of the CRS Science Super Star Challenge. This program was developed with the support of our Advisory Council to encourage and recognize teachers for excellence in leading their students in science learning. Over 100 teachers completed the challenge each of the last two years – involving 3,000 students each year!

The Science Super Star Challenge relies on the generosity of science education programs around the bay and publishing houses for the prizes (including field trips, activity kits, science books, and more) that we award to teachers and their students. Last year we gave away



more than 5,000 science and engineering themed, grade level appropriate books to students and teachers. We hope we'll give away that many – or more – this year too.

We are deeply grateful for the partnership of many science education organizations, including our amazing Bay Area science centers, who provide passes for field trips, in-school programs, assemblies, and more.

For more information, please visit [www.crs-science.org/educators/SSSprogram](http://www.crs-science.org/educators/SSSprogram)



## Exploring Crab Cove: Field Trip for Teachers

Birdwatching on the shore at sunset, a visit to the “fish hotel”, and behind the scenes tour of the science center at Crab Cove were the highlights of our Fall Field Trip for Teachers!

This relaxed professional learning event, co-hosted by East Bay Regional Parks Crab Cove staff, allowed teachers to enjoy wine and pizza while networking with fellow teachers, and learning about EBRP offerings including field trips, in-class programs, and environmental education resources.

In addition, naturalists from the Golden State Audobon Society and Stepping Out Stepping In (at Middle Harbor) were on hand to share information about the educational programs, field trips, and materials they provide.



*Teachers bird watching at Crab Cove*

We at CRS enjoy these opportunities to spend time getting to know our teacher members personally, fielding requests for support, and connecting teachers with some of the amazing science, engineering, and environmental education resources we are so fortunate to have available in our region.

Thank you to the naturalists at EBRP for hosting, and sharing so much information about the fish, birds,

and other shoreline wildlife. The calm beauty of Crab Cove as sunset transitioned to twilight was a perfect tranquil ending to another hectic week.

Next Field Trip: March 2016-- Science Education Resource Fair with Chabot Space and Science Center

## Providing Time and Space for Teachers to Learn Together

Peering through hand lenses to examine the bugs collected from the schoolyard, building towers out of index cards, and tasting tangy lemons are just some of the hands-on activities hundreds of teachers have laughed and learned together as they participated in recent CRS professional development workshops aimed to help teachers deepen their science teaching practice.



*Teacher examines bugs at the ESCAPE Summer Intensive*

The opportunity to conduct science field research alongside biologists, experiment with engineering design challenges, and explore elements of scientific investigations as learners gives teachers a chance to enrich their first-hand experiences that then inform how they lead their students in learning activities.

In partnership with the Lawrence Hall of Science Bay Area Science Project and UC Berkeley Natural History Museums, CRS engaged a group of West Contra Costa teachers in a week-long summer intensive in which graduate student researchers led teachers through a range of investigations about bugs, plants, water systems, and more.

Said one teacher at the end of the week:

“I avoided science all through school, from high school through college. I always felt intimidated. After this training I feel so much more empowered to be a scientist! Thank you so much.”

At schools in Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville, Albany, and West Contra Costa, CRS has been bringing customized professional development workshops to hundreds of teachers eager to learn more about new science standards, elementary engineering, and how science is practiced “in the real world.”

Said one principal recently:

*“This is outstanding! Thank you for all the great professional development that you and your team have provided our West Oakland Educators. Your support has allowed all of our elementary schools to be united in our efforts to strengthen our STEM corridor and share best practices for the instruction of science so that our students benefit by continuing to excel with academic discussions, writing with evidence, and exposure to complex text.”*



*Teachers build with index cards at the La Escuelita PD*

## Thank you to our 2015 Partners & Supporters

*The support of these foundations makes it possible for CRS to provide teachers, schools and districts with free support and in-class scientist presentations. Thank you to these partners in helping to educate the scientists, engineers, leaders, and problem solvers of tomorrow. This list includes funders who have supported our work in 2015.*

### Foundation Grants supporting CRS in 2015:

S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation  
Clorox Company Foundation  
Joseph and Vera Long Foundation  
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The Marine Mammal Center  
The Natural Grocery Co.  
The Tech Museum of Innovation  
Tootsies Rockridge  
Trader Joe's Rockridge  
Village Market  
Viv & Ingrid  
Xocolate

### Thank you to our:

- 1,200+ teacher members,
- 550+ scientist and engineer BASIS volunteers
- 100+ science education partners!

### 2015 In-kind donations:

Adapt Clothing  
Aquarium of the Bay  
Berkeley Bowl West  
Berkeley Iron Works  
Bette's Oceanview Diner

## Smile While You Shop

If you shop on Amazon.com this holiday season, consider "smiling" for CRS by logging into your account using the company's charitable giving platform:

[www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com)

**amazon**smile  
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Select Community Resources for Science as your beneficiary organization and shop as usual!



Student shows off his creation for the aluminium boat challenge

# Thank You Professor Bergman



Professor Bergman in the lab with Becca Wilson.



Scientist mentor helps student with experiment



Students anxiously await materials for a pill coating lesson

Thanks to the wonderful generosity of Professor Robert Bergman and his wife Wendy for the Fall 2014 \$25,000 challenge matching gift. CRS individual giving reached new heights in 2014. Please help us meet our 2015 goal of \$35,000 in individual donations.

# Help Us Keep Science Thriving In Local Schools

Consider these examples of what your donation could do this year!

- \$75: One science visit to a class of 25-30 students
- \$100: Customized support for 10 teachers
- \$250: Training sessions for 10-15 volunteers
- \$500: Field Trip for Teachers Event
- \$1,000: Workshop stipends for educators



To make a donation, go online to [www.crscience.org/events/fallgiving](http://www.crscience.org/events/fallgiving) OR mail your check and the form below to: Community Resources for Science / 1611 San Pablo Ave. Suite 10 B / Berkeley, CA 94702

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I/We would like to be acknowledged as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

To honor a specific teacher, please tell us his/her name, school, and address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## STEM Volunteers Gather for BASIS Fall Kickoff

*Experimental question: How many pizzas does it take to draw over 100 scientists and engineers to a volunteer celebration?*

*Data collected: At least 20 extra large sized pizzas.*

A sizeable portion of the more than 500 scientist and engineer volunteers who make up the BASIS (Bay Area Scientists in Schools) corps turned out for the 2015 Fall Kickoff Celebration on the UC Berkeley campus in September.

CRS board member and BASIS co-founder Professor Robert Bergman was on hand to deliver inspirational remarks. He expressed his appreciation to the volunteers, and stressed the importance for scientists to reaching young students and their teachers by volunteering to share their love of science in classrooms.

Veteran volunteers welcomed new recruits, and chatted with friends and labmates while learning about the

CRS BASIS goals for 2015-16. Noshing on pizza and snacks, volunteers took in a beautiful view of the Bay, and acknowledged the great work of our campus BASIS Steering Committee members in helping to make BASIS a satisfying and fun outreach program for volunteers.

The BASIS event launched what's proving to be one of our most successful years. We already have over 150 lessons scheduled, meaning over 3500 students are being inspired by exciting, hands-on science lessons, and over 150 teachers are being inspired by how engaging science is for their students.

The lessons our volunteers have already brought to East Bay classrooms have received terrific feedback from teachers, with 100% reporting high levels of student engagement. And it's only mid-October! We aim to present over 500 lessons again this year.



*BASIS Volunteers give a lesson to 1st Graders*

## Pop Up Science!

Making aluminum foil boats at Lake Merritt, designing bubble solutions and wands at a Berkeley street festival, or exploring properties of veggies at farmers markets, CRS volunteers have been bringing fun, exciting science and engineering activities to unexpected places this Fall. To the delight of kids and adults alike, science outreach "pop-up" tables at festivals and farmers' markets highlights how much science is all around us in daily life. Be sure to catch us at the Bay Area Science Festival grand event, **Discovery Days at AT&T Park in San Francisco on Saturday, November 7th from 10am-4pm.**



*Students engineer paths for marbles at 2014 Discovery Day*



*A student takes on an aluminium boat challenge at Love Our Lake Day in Oakland.*



*Students learn about fruit at the Downtown Berkeley Farmer's Market*

*"Effective science instruction is extremely important for our students and our community but doesn't usually get the attention it deserves because of competing demands and because it requires so much knowledge, preparation, class time, and equipment. Outside support is so helpful to me as a teacher in making science instruction happen."*

-- Berkeley Teacher



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR SCIENCE

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2nd year of connecting 7th Graders and scientist mentors in our Be A Scientist Program

*"Thanks everybody for an enthusiastic, well-prepared lesson. My students loved it and could see you as role models. You have really instilled a love for science in many of them."*  
-- Oakland 2nd Grade Teacher