

SCIENCE ATL

2021 Annual Report



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We began our last annual report with the sentence "Wow - this has been quite a year." And our sentiment as we prepared this report was pretty much the same. It has been QUITE a year!

But last year as we wrote these words, we were more busy mourning the loss of our regular way of doing the good work we do in the community, and we were just starting to figure out how to do things differently to meet our new reality. But now that we've been in it for a year, we can say with confidence that we were able to adjust - not just adjust, but thrive.

The pandemic forced upon us a new way of approaching our flagship event, the Atlanta Science Festival. And with this rethinking came more creativity and ability to reach audiences who had never been able to attend ASF before. Our primary youth program - Georgia Chief Science Officers - took place virtually, which allowed us the opportunity to connect with students more regularly and on a deeper individual level. Not only did our tried and true programs flourish, we actually started doing some new things this year too! With the hire of a full-time public events coordinator, we began hosting interesting public events on a regular basis, and we launched our first STEM Professional School Partnership program (read more about it later in this report!).

We feel so fortunate to have been able to continue doing this important work in the community. Regardless of what the future holds, we remain focused on our goal of cultivating a city that loves and appreciates science.

Best,
Jordan Rose & Meisa Salaita
Co-Executive Directors

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER THROUGH THE WONDER OF SCIENCE

We envision Atlanta as a science city, where people celebrate a shared appreciation for the ways science and technology are fundamental to the health and prosperity of our community. Science ATL aims to create a community of lifelong learners who value the role science plays in improving our daily lives. The

guiding goals of our organization help us to achieve our mission: To cultivate an equitable community of lifelong learners across metro Atlanta who are connected and inspired by the wonder of science.

GOALS

LOVE OF SCIENCE

Inspire a lifelong sense of wonder & curiosity about the world. Strengthen the value people place on science. Foster positive relationships between the public and science/scientists. Increase participation in out-of-school learning opportunities for all ages.

3

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Use the universality of science to bring people together. Integrate science into Atlanta's arts and culture by working with diverse partners. Seed and strengthen collaborations. Empower young leaders to drive positive change in their communities.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Build equitable access
to science learning
experiences for groups
underrepresented in
STEM. Make BIPOC
voices & stories related to
STEM more visible. Build
community partnerships
designed ensure programs
are co-created by and
welcoming of BIPOC
communities.



WHAT WE DO

Science ATL brings people together through the wonder of science. Our 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization produces events and community-building activities to improve access to science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEM/STEAM) learning opportunities, and to strengthen Atlanta's STEAM ecosystem. Founded in 2014 as Atlanta Science Festival Inc. by Emory University, Georgia Tech, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the organization changed its name to Science ATL Inc. in 2019.

Since 2014, we have brought engaging informal science learning experiences to more than 250,000 people in the metro region. Eight years of Atlanta Science Festival events have inspired many Atlanta youth and adults to see that science is present all around and can be for everyone, not just those with white coats in labs. In addition to the Festival, we develop and collaborate on new and accessible year-round events, work to broaden and strengthen partnerships across educational, cultural and industry sectors, and create programs that inspire and prepare the next generation of STEM leaders. Our efforts fall into three main categories:



Public engagement is key to our goal of building community around a love of science. The largest elements of our annual programming involve bringing people together for nature walks, animal observations, explosive chemistry demonstrations, and so much more. We strive to think creatively about how to spark curiosity and share the wonder of science with people of all backgrounds across metro Atlanta.

2021 ATLANTA SCIENCE FESTIVAL

The eighth annual Atlanta Science Festival was one like no other. The pandemic caused us to rethink the entire structure of the Festival - from how we built our partnerships to how we engaged the public. The result of the overhaul was a very different looking Festival than the previous years, but arguably a Festival that was more creative and with a much broader reach.

We maintained elements of past Festivals that we loved: partners contributing great ideas, events with reach all over the metro region, science put front and center while still being woven into everyday life, direct work with Title 1 schools, and more. But thanks to the pandemic forcing restrictions upon our typical approach, we added in new elements: creative self guided experiences, more time spent discovering science outdoors, virtual events with the capacity to reach many, many more people, online programming additions from experts outside Atlanta, to name a few.



2021 FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS







17,000 PARTICIPANTS





87 **CLASSROOM VISITS**



29 SPONSORS













FESTIVAL EVENTS

In collaboration with 46 program partners, the Atlanta Science Festival offered 95 unique events. To keep participants safe in the pandemic, events were offered both online (64%) and in-person as small-scale and outdoors only (36%). Despite the different format, we were able to still offer hands-on experiments, immersive performances, tours, and talks, connecting scientists, teachers, and entrepreneurs with communities of young people, families, and adults interested in the roles science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) play in today's world.

In addition to the many events hosted by Festival partners, Science ATL produced more programming this year in replacement of the typical launch event and Exploration Expo.

DISCOVERY WALKS

People across the metro region flocked to pick up a Discovery Walk map from one of four locations throughout the city, taking nature and urban hikes with their families. Each map contained stories connecting stops on the path to science - from discoveries of champion trees in Cascade Springs Nature Preserve to the construction of churches in Sweet Auburn.

ATLANTA 40

With the Festival, we launched a new conservation web-app game that celebrated 40 organisms central to Atlanta's identity. From peach trees to falcons to kudzu and endangered species, Atlantans were (re)introduced to the nature around them. Each species covered came with a microconservation assignment tied to it to help protect the wonderful species native to our region.

CITY SCIENCE QUEST

Participants in the City Science Quest uncovered Atlanta's innovations, discoveries, and STEM careers by completing missions from the comfort of their homes in this app-based scavenger hunt for kids and adults. With Quests planned each of the three weekends of the Festival, curious kids and adults got to compete for prizes and learn all about interesting local scientific research.

PARTNER EVENTS

Partners across the metro region stepped up to participate in the Festival in new and creative ways, helping us to offer nearly 100 events at the 2021 Festival. With the emphasis on greater time with the family unit that the pandemic brought us, our events shifted to include more offerings for children and families (85% of events), including an online exploration of spa chemistry, a drive-in science demo show in Decatur, a plant scavenger hunt at the Atlanta Botanical Garden, and much more.



50%
OF 2021 ATTENDEES
HAD NEVER BEEN TO
A PREVIOUS ASF



ONLINE OFFERINGS

As we settled into the new virtual space, Science ATL pivoted to offer public engagement activities in the online world. From monthly episodes of an in-house produced video-cast to partnerships with GPB, Horizon Theatre, and Emory University, we brought science onto the screen and into people's homes.

SCREENINGS

2020 brought with it the opportunity to partner in new ways.

With Horizon Theatre, we partnered on the production of a virtual play, *Completeness*, with scientist talkbacks. Streamed four times in the fall, the play was shared with nearly 800 people, and then revived again for more audiences during the 2021 Atlanta Science Festival.

We teamed up with Georgia Public Broadcasting for a screening of selected STEM-focused short films from the *Unladylike 2020* collection, a short documentary series profiling diverse and little-known American women from the turn of the 20th century, and contemporary women who follow in their footsteps.





WONDERCAST

Amidst the new social distancing norms, we launched a new videocast series. Aired as both full episodes and short design challenges, *Wondercast* aimed to inspire curiosity and wonder by diving scientific topics with the help of a local STEM partners. The monthly series ran from June to December of 2020 and covered such topics as microbes, pollution, bats, conservation, and maybe even poop! The Emory University sponsored series offered an accessible and playful investigation of scientific concepts to the 1700+ viewers.

LATINO YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

We collaborated with the Latin American Association to create Science At Your Fingertips, a virtual scavenger hunt using the Goosechase App for their Latino Youth Leadership Conference.

The annual conference aims to excite and inspire middle and high school students to cultivate the leadership skills and interests needed in post-secondary education. The theme for 2020 was "Create the World We Want to Live In" so our activity challenged 6th and 7th grade students with 30 virtual "missions" that connected them with science and engineering concepts found at home environments and in careers across Atlanta.

THE SCIENCE SCENE

Atlanta's public science events calendar is hosted by Science ATL. The Science Scene connects audiences of all ages to science experiences happening across the metro area. These events are primarily hosted by our community partners, which helps us stay connected to their year-round events. This resource serves as a portal for discovering opportunities to experience science learning outside the classroom. Making it easier for people to discover STEM learning opportunities helps strengthen the identity of Atlanta as a science city. More than 50 partners and 650 events were featured this year.

COMMUNICATION FELLOWSHIP

Building the communication skills of scientists is a critical component of sharing scientific information with the public in a way that is clear, relevant, and captivating. To that end, our team brought together our third cohort of Science ATL Communication Fellows with support from Emory University. Twelve Fellows, selected from over 125 applicants, represented a diverse range of scientific fields, past experiences, and professional interests. Students from Emory University, Georgia Tech, GSU, and Morehouse School of Medicine joined us to cover topics such as narrative, communication models, interview techniques, and more and then had the opportunity to put what they learned to action with several practical experiences.

SCIENCE ATL PASSPORT

To be an explorer doesn't always mean going to new places. Sometimes, exploration can happen all around you. The Science ATL Passport is a guide for kids to be scientific explorers without ever needing to leave Atlanta. It invites and encourages young scientists to explore the world around them through their five senses. Each page offers ideas for experiments, activities, or local adventures as well as blank space for them to record notes, drawings and questions about the topics and ideas they discover.

We were thrilled to offer this unique at-home STEM learning experience to partners and families at the start of the pandemic. In addition, with the support of International Paper and the United Way of Greater Atlanta, we partnered with Brown Toy Box to provide the passport to 200 children in Clayton County over the first summer of pandemic. The Passport is also available for purchase on our new store.





VISIBILITY

The Atlanta Science Festival and other Science ATL programs have attracted a great deal of community attention and media spotlights, with over 20 million media impressions in the past year. Strategic social media efforts built on a foundation of interesting content like Awesome Science Facts and ALEX Explores ATL contests have grown our following across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to more than 46.000 fans.

Media attention for Science ATL plus our own promotional efforts have highlighted the good work of our many partners around the city, showcasing their science education offerings, advances in research and STEM- related products.

MEDIA HITS

90.1 WABE • 11 ALIVE • WSB-TV • ATLANTA PARENT • DEKALB NEIGHBOR • ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION • NY TIMES • SAPORTA REPORT • GPB. ORG • GOOD DAY ATLANTA FOX 5 • WSB RADIO • NORTH SIDE NEIGHBOR • MARIETTA DAILY JOURNAL • LIVINGIN TOWN.COM

GEORGIA CHIEF SCIENCE OFFICERS

Georgia Chief Science Officers (CSO) is a STEM leadership development program that empowers middle and high school students to lead community change. The program, developed with major support from The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, enhances students' leadership, communication, and project management skills in order to facilitate the emergence of youth voices in STEM.



CSO BY THE NUMBERS



44 STUDENTS



6 COUNTIES



90%
FROM GROUPS UNDER-REPRESENTED
IN STEM



2700
STUDENTS ENGAGED IN CSO-LED COMMUNITY PROJECTS

GEORGIA CSOs CLASS OF 2021*

















































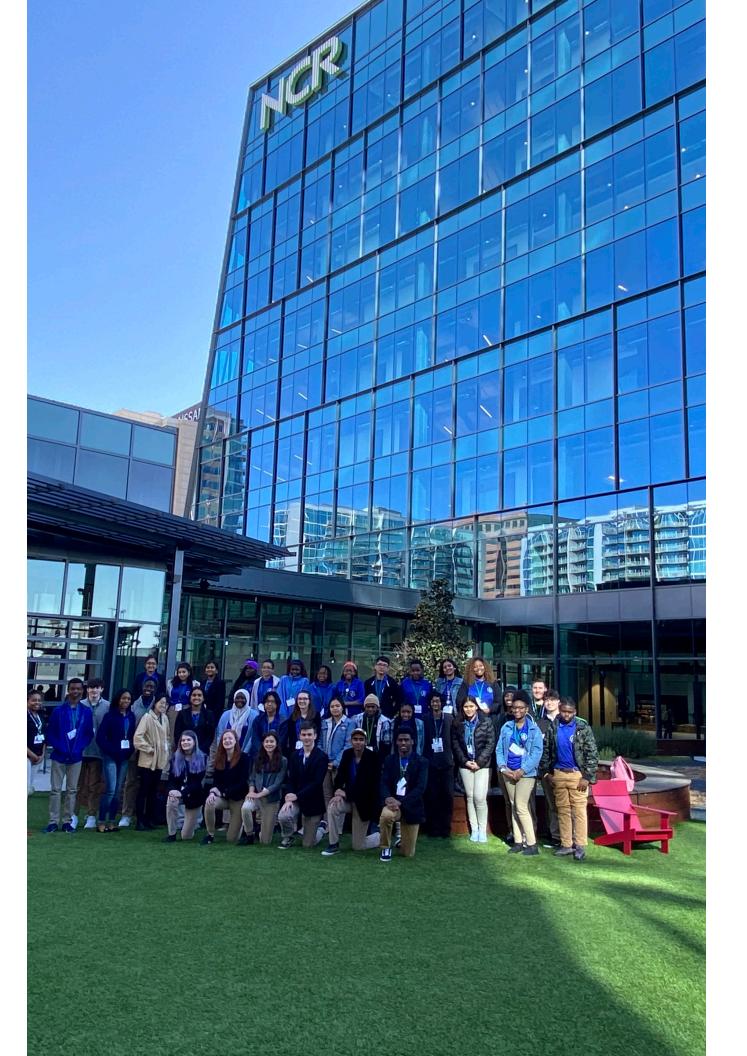
*Not all CSOs pictured.

Attitude of Action

Many of our CSOs found creative ways to impact their community through Action Plans in spite of this challenging year. CSOs created podcasts and virtual panel discussions featuring STEM professionals from underrepresented groups in STEM, conducted "STEMonstrations" and created STEM kits for elementary students, created after-school STEM clubs, developed content for STEM newsletters, conducted COVID-19 outreach programs to raise awareness about the pandemic and the measures community members could take to curb the spread. In all, 18 student-led action plans were implemented across metro Atlanta, directly engaging over 2700 other students in STEM activities.

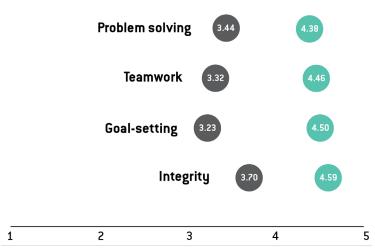
Sense of STEM

Thirteen STEM professionals from academia and industry participated in monthly webinars as Leadership Coaches, sharing their career journeys and leadership experiences in the field. Students met representatives from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Emory University, Georgia Tech, Morehouse School of Medicine, Zoo Atlanta, US Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, Kimberly Clark, 4D Engineering, International Flavors & Fragrances, PRESSO, Dendreon, and Novagen Diagnostics.



Life of Leadership

CSOs participate in a curriculum designed with monthly leadership topics, and biweekly virtual meetings. Through skill-building workshops and practice planning and leading their own community Action Plan projects, CSOs improved their self-reported leadership competence by 8.9% (from 3.93 to 4.28), and reported gains in their understanding of problem-solving, teamwork, goal-setting, and integrity. Interestingly, the program was equally impactful for students in zip codes with low and high Child Well-Being ratings (as designated by the United Way of Greater Atlanta).



GEORGIA STEM DAY



STEM-ONSTRATIONS
GEORGIA SCIENCE QUEST
LIVE STEAM PANEL FROM
MERCEDES-BENZ STADIUM
CAREER
CONVERSATIONS

Georgia STEM Day was celebrated on May 7, 2021 with a series of live streaming activities for K-12 educators and students throughout the state. TAG Education Collaborative, which organizes STEM Day annually, partnered with Science ATL this year to produce a slate of programming options for easy plug-and-play participation.





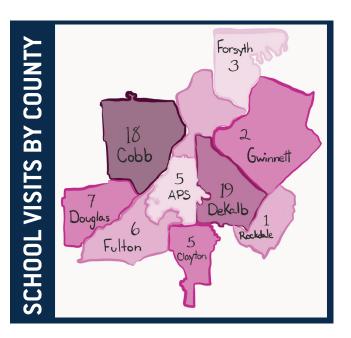
IMAGINING THE FUTURE STEM PROFESSIONALS VIRTUALLY VISITING METRO AREA CLASSROOMS

Now in its eighth year, the Imagining the Future program connects K-12 teachers with STEM professionals for classroom visits. Each spring, the program reaches thousands of children throughout the metro region and offers an excellent opportunity for scientists to connect with the community.

In a year with limited access to classroom lab activities, field trips, and guest speakers, the virtual ITF program had a powerful impact on student exposure to STEM careers. Over 60% of the participating classrooms had not had a STEM professional visit them all year. The program helped connect students and teachers to a cancer researcher, amphibian program coordinator, cosmetics formulator, endangered species specialist, meteorologist, epidemiologist, software engineer, VP of Technology, obstetrician, microbiologist, nuclear engineer, information security specialist, shark biologist, astronomy researcher and more!







I highly encourage you all to take advantage of ATL Science Festival. [We had] a Chemical Engineer present and conduct an experiment. We made worms from CaCl and Alginate!!! It was REALLLLLLYYYYYY cool and the students LOVED it!

- Teacher participating in the Imagining the Future program

Science ATL is committed not only to increasing participation in out-of-school science experiences but to seed and strengthen collaborations among organizations across Atlanta dedicated to fostering lifelong learning across fields. Science touches many other cultural and educational fields, and Science ATL seeks to integrate public science activities into Atlanta's arts and culture by producing and promoting events with diverse partners. Doing so broadens our audience and our capacity to inspire more people to wonder about their world.

As we continue to evolve, we are prioritizing deepening community partnerships and ensuring that our initiatives are intentional about equity and racial justice. In the fall of 2020, we began by reflecting on our role as stewards and facilitators of public science experiences and determining how we can ensure that our internal and external processes and partnerships demonstrate our commitment to equity and access. As such, we are doing a lot of listening and learning from community leaders working with youth in metro Atlanta and identifying new ways to collaborate and strengthen the STEM ecosystem. We are dedicated to learning directly from students in underresourced neighborhoods what challenges they want to use STEM to address and how we can support their efforts. And we are developing a Volunteer Hub that makes it easier for STEM professionals who want to volunteer in schools to connect with interested schools and vice versa.



STEM PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

The STEM Professional School Partnership (SPSP) program cultivates strong, impactful, and sustainable partnerships between diverse STEM professionals and K-12 schools, in order to enhance access to STEM learning resources and careers. The program launched in 2020-2021 with funding from American Association for the Advancement of Science and Lyda Hill Philanthropies' IF/THEN Ambassador program, in partnership with local AAAS IF/THEN Ambassador, Paula Garcia Todd.



The inaugural program created 30 STEM partnerships for a year of monthly interactions, reaching 4700 students (53% female) with 238 logged hours of STEM engagements. Schools (86.7% Title I) participated from 8 metro Atlanta districts. Among the 30 STEM professionals, 63% were female, 57% were Black/African-American, and 13% were Latinx/ Hispanic, ensuring representation from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM careers.

Each partnership set two goals to work toward based on school needs assessments and asset mapping activities. Quarterly webinars and monthly newsletters kept the cohort connected and motivated. By the year's end, our partnerships achieved 81% progress toward their goals, and were 88% likely to continue the partnership into the next year.



PARTNERS*

FESTIVAL & PUBLIC EVENT PARTNERS

AAAS IF/THEN Initiative

Agnes Scott College

Ask Deer Abby

Atlanta Botanical Garden

Autrey Mill Nature Preserve and Heritage Center

The Branch Out Initiative

Burns & McDonnell

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Center for Puppetry Arts

Citizen Science HD

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Delta Community Credit Union

Dendreon

Education Enhanced

Elegua

Emory University*

Fernbank Museum

First Christian Church of Decatur

Found Stages

Fulton Country Library System

Fulton County/Johns Creek Environmental Cam-

pus

Georgia Aquarium

Georgia Institute of Technology*

Georgia Power*

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MODA

National Geographic Kids

Partnership for Southern Equity

Penguin Young Readers

Piedmont Park Conservancy

RoachLab.org

Savannah Science Museum

Science for Georgia

Science Gallery Atlanta

Small Bites Adventure Club

Spelman College

STEM Compass

The Story Collider

TAG-ED

TCAAD

Trees Atlanta

UGA Extension

UPS*

The Village Tutorial and Enrichment Program

West Atlanta Watershed Alliance

Whole World Improv Theatre

Zoo Atlanta

Denotes partner is also a sponsor

24

YOUTH PROGRAMMING PARTNERS

21st Century Leaders 3D Girls

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Amana Academy (Fulton County)

American Association for the Advancement of Science

American Industrial Hygiene Association Apex Companies, LLC

The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation

Atlanta Center for Medical Research

Babb Middle School (Clayton County)

Banneker High School (Fulton County)

Bear Creek Middle School (Fulton County)

Bolton Academy (Atlanta)

Booker T. Washington High School (Atlanta)

Brown Middle School (Atlanta)

Brumby Elementary (Cobb County)

Callaway Elementary School (Clayton County)

CDC Foundation

Centennial Academy (Atlanta)

Chamblee Middle School (DeKalb County)

Chubb Insurance

Clarkston High School (DeKalb County)

The Clorox Company

Code Elephant

Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership

Academy (Atlanta)

Cox Automotive

Cox Enterprises

Crawford Long Middle School (Atlanta)

Delta Community Credit Union

Diamond Crystal Brands

Dream in S.T.E.A.M.

Dunleith Elementary School (Marietta City)

EAGLE 7 LLC

Eddie J. White Elementary Academy (Clayton

County)

Education Enhanced

Emory University

Forest Park High School (Clayton County)

Fountain Elementary (Clayton County)

Frank L. Stanton Elementary School (Atlanta)

Garden Glow Wellness

Georgia Department of Transportation

Georgia Institute of Technology

Georgia Power

Georgia Tech Research Institute

Graham Moore Education Consultants

Green Acres Elementary School (Cobb County)

HDR. Inc.

Honey Creek Elementary (Rockdale County)

International Paper

Itron

James H. Brown Elementary (Clayton County)

Johns Creek High School (Fulton County)

Karen Peterman Consulting

KIPP WAYS (Atlanta)

Laurel Ridge (Dekalb County)

Liberty Building Forensics Group

Lockheed Elementary (Marietta City)

Lockheed Martin

Lost Mountain Middle School (Cobb County)

Lovejoy High School (Clayton County)

Lydia Hill Philanthropies

Marietta Middle School (Marietta City)

ME Stilwell School of Arts (Clayton County)

Mercedes-Benz Stadium STEAM Tours

Morehouse School of Medicine

Morrow High School (Clayton County)

Mundy's Mill Middle School (Clayton County)

NCR Foundation

New Manchester High School (Douglas County)

North Clayton Middle School (Clayton County)

Northside Hospital

Norton Park Elementary (Cobb County)

Paulding County High School (Paulding County)

Qubit by Qubit

Redan High School (DeKalb County)

Renaissance Middle School (Fulton County)

Rex Mill Middle STEM School (Clayton County)

Sci-Tech Institute

Sherwin-Williams

South Atlanta High School (Atlanta)

South Cobb High School (Cobb County)

South Paulding High School (Paulding County)

STEAMsport

Stone Mountain Middle School (Dekalb County)

TAG Education Collaborative

TMTS Associates, Inc.

Tucker High School (Dekalb County)

Tucker Middle School (Dekalb County)

Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy (Atlanta)

UCB

United Way of Greater Atlanta

UPS

Vaniam Group

Varner Elementary (Cobb County)

Webb Bridge Middle School (Fulton County)

Wells Fargo

Wheeler Magnet High School (Cobb County)

Zoo Atlanta







THE ARTHUR M. BLANK FAMILY FOUNDATION

























































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SPECIAL THANKS TO

Pro-Bono Partnership of Atlanta: Lori Shapiro Purpose Possible: Susannah Darrow ThrdSpace: Nasim Fluker GSU Motion Design Students Bill Christian

IN LOVING MEMORY OF DEBORAH MULLIS - A PART OF THE SCIENCE ATL TEAM ALWAYS.

SCIENCE ATL

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Science ATL, Inc. was founded by:





