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Fall 2021

For over 32 years, RESET has delivered STEM activities to DC-area students, including many from underserved communities. You play a vital role in sustaining our work and helping us in our fourth decade as an award-winning nonprofit. Please 'like us' on [Facebook](#) and 'follow us' on [Twitter](#) and Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/resetonline/>

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 The pandemic has negatively affected our fundraising operations, so any help you can provide is very much appreciated. Thank you!



**STEM Quiz:**

What social cost in dollars did the White House Council on Economic Advisors set this year per ton of carbon emissions?

- a) .5
- b) 2
- c). 14
- d). 51

Find the answer at end of this Newsletter.

**Feature Article**

**Spooky Science in Alexandria**

For several years volunteer Eric Greenlee has organized a RESET team to lead STEM activities at the Spooky Science event in Alexandria. Organized by Zohreh Khoshnamak, the annual Halloween-themed festival provides children the opportunity to explore STEM through hands-on learning. Each year hundreds of children, accompanied by their parents and other adults, participate in the outdoor event at Watergate at Landmark. Children, many of them in costumes, meander through the outdoor event and visit stations to undertake STEM activities.



This year Eric and his team set up a table where children explored the density of liquids. By carefully adding one fluid to another they created layers that brought understanding to real-world occurrences, for example, why oil spills float on the surface of water bodies.

When asked about the extra work involved in planning the STEM activities, Zohreh responded: "While doing hands-on experiments and demonstrations do require much more preparation, setup and actual work, I believe that it increases the kids' interest in science. Being involved in the process of the outcome makes it tangible for the kids and helps them to make a direct connection to science."



Volunteer Eric Greenlee wears a wizard hat as children explore liquid density

**STEM is Elementary- From Pre-K through 5 Q and A With RESET Teacher Susan Garman**

**"Having RESET volunteers in my classroom has been such a great experience for everyone involved. I hope to continue our partnership for many years to come!"**  
 Susan Garman

**Q:** You've hosted RESET volunteers in Barrett Elementary classrooms since 2013. What makes you such a long-standing supporter of RESET volunteers in your classrooms?

**A:** Having scientists and engineers in the classroom gives students and teachers the opportunity to learn new things in a fun and hands-on way. Since 2013, I have worked with students pre-k to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. No matter what level the students are, they have always become excited when told that the RESET volunteer would be coming to class on a given day. Some have been extremely bright students. They have really appreciated having people from the STEM fields come into the classroom to teach them things they have always wondered about.



Susan Garman

**Q:** Your first RESET program was for fifth graders and the last few years have been for pre-kindergarten students. How do approaches to hands-on STEM learning differ for students of different ages?

**A:** I have always asked the volunteers what their passion is. Then we have looked at the state standards. Then we work to marry their passion with the standards. No matter what your age, if you are passionate about something, you will encourage others to be passionate about it too! Hands-on is all about using as many senses as possible to learn about the world.

**Q:** What makes RESET volunteers effective in influencing students' attitudes towards STEM learning?

**A:** Many of our students come from low income, non-English speaking homes. In addition, they have limited experiences. RESET volunteers bring experiences into the classroom to help them gain a better understanding of the world around them. They also help spark interests that may lead the child to a career in a STEM field. You never know what will make a lasting impression on a child.

**Q:** One of RESET's objectives is to encourage students to consider careers in STEM fields. What techniques can volunteers use to achieve that?

**A:** It is important that volunteers bring their love of STEM to the classroom! The volunteer that is presently working with me, Ms. Fandel, a marine biologist, dresses the part. For example, when she is teaching my students about worms, she dresses like a farmer. She also shows as much excitement when observing and touching the worms, as my students do. It is important to meet the child where they are and go from there.

**Q:** How can teachers best collaborate with their RESET volunteers to reinforce the STEM learning?

**A:** It is VERY important that the volunteer and teacher form a relationship before the volunteer works in the classroom. How you do this depends on what schedules allow; it may be via in person meetings, virtual meetings, or email. Unfortunately, there is a lot of pressure on teachers and students to perform well on standardized tests. Due to this, volunteers need to be aware of time constraints and the need to focus on the standards during a lesson. Above all, RESET volunteers need to bring their passion and excitement to the classroom every time they come!

**Launching RESET's School Year 2021-22**

RESET is working to place volunteers with students in 27 Washington DC area schools for this school year. In addition to traditional placement and planning activity, this year involves addressing Coronavirus precautions that continue to impact school system administrators, Principals, teachers and students, as well as RESET operations. RESET's Amanda Laurier is navigating the differing health and safety protocols for all of our partner school systems and sites.

So far twelve schools are on board for in-person programming at this time. Many of these classrooms had RESET volunteers during the 2020-2021 and/or 2019-2020 school year (or even longer), and have well-established teacher-volunteer partnerships. Most of these sites are preparing to begin their programs later this fall; on-site RESET volunteers will be vaccinated.

Barrett Elementary in Arlington was the first school to start their lessons this fall. Pre-K students in Susan Garman's class (see separate item) have been working with RESET volunteer Amber Fandel since October 1, and have participated in two lessons. The first lesson provided students with the opportunity to engage in practices that scientists use, and to explore tools such as magnifying glasses. The second lesson allowed students to explore the properties of sound.



RESET Volunteer and a pre-K student communicate through sound waves traveling through masks and string.

**Volunteers: Reconnecting after A Tumultuous Time**

If you are a RESET volunteer affected by COVID circumstances and are interested in returning to the classroom, leading on-line programs or joining teams at week-end community STEM programs, we are anxious to hear from you. We look forward to reaching our pre-pandemic level of activity. Please contact Keith Osterhage: [keith\\_osterhage@msn.com](mailto:keith_osterhage@msn.com)

**Answer to STEM Quiz**

About \$51 per ton, up from as low as \$1 per ton in recent years. (Scientific American, March 2021) <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/cost-of-carbon-pollution-pegged-at-51-a-ton/>

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