



**4th Quarter LaSTEM Advisory Council Meeting  
November 10, 2021  
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.**

The LaSTEM Advisory Council met on Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at the Hilton Shreveport and Sci-Port Discovery Center in Shreveport, Louisiana.

**Committee Members/Representatives Present**

Bianca Deliberto (Proxy – Jean May Brett)  
Breigh Rhodes (Proxy – John Underwood)  
Calvin Mackie (Proxy – Lawrence Jackson)  
Clint Coleman  
Crystal Gordon  
David Lafargue  
Frank Neubrandner  
Jawanda Givens  
Kellie Taylor-White  
Kenya Messer (Proxy – Rebecca Murphy)  
Michael Gaudet  
Ronnie Morris  
Susan Schowen  
William Wainwright

**Committee Members Not Present**

Christen Timmins  
Jaimee Williams  
Janet Pope  
Jim Henderson  
Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed  
Larry Carter, Jr.  
Mahyar Amouzegar  
Melissa Mann  
Patty Glasser  
Rep. Polly Thomas

Rachel Vincent-Finley  
Scott Stevens  
Sen. Sharon Hewitt  
Tina Watts  
Tom Yura

**Staff Members Present**

Christine Norton  
Clint Coleman  
Jennifer Stevens  
Karthik Poobalashubramanian

**STEM Center Directors & Guests**

Beonica Rutherford-Frazier  
Cathi Cox-Boniol  
Christie Landry  
Daphine Barnes  
Dianne Clark  
Heather Kleiner  
Jennifer DePriest  
Jennifer Johnson  
Jessica Meyer Deville  
Kelly Martin-Rivers  
Kim Fossey  
Mark Arseneault  
Pam Atchison  
Wendy Conarro

**Welcome, Roll Call, Agenda, and Updates**

Dr. Coleman called the meeting to order at 1:23 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarterly LaSTEM Advisory Council Meeting. Next, Dr. Coleman welcomed new Council member, Breigh Rhodes with the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and called role.

*A quorum was not met at this meeting and therefore, approval of the third quarter minutes could not be completed. The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter meeting minutes will be approved at the next quarterly meeting in January.*

**Council Discussion**

Dr. Coleman transitioned into conversation regarding the Spooky STEM event, which was held in region 3. In response to Hurricane Ida, and in partnership with Chevron, the Brown Foundation in New

Orleans, and the Board of Regents, holiday STEM kits were created for the impacted areas, spanning October through December. On October 28, over 300 families were served and 500 STEM boxes were given away. Each box was designed for grades K – 8 and contained three activities and a printed and online manual. Local community organizations also attended and provided food distribution and supplies, school uniforms, and trick-or-treat bags. The next event is scheduled for November 20 for the Thanksgiving holiday at the library in Pierre Part. In addition, the last distribution event will be Christmas/holiday-themed, with details still being finalized.

Next, Dr. Coleman discussed the NASA LaSPACE Fall Meeting. At this meeting, Dr. Coleman presented on the following topic, “Ideas are Easy, Implementation is Hard. Lessons Learned from Our Virtual NASA Astro Camps.” Through a partnership with Chevron and Shell, along with Central Creativity in Mississippi, the Astro Camps were a week-long summer camp held through Zoom. Each student received a kit containing all the materials needed to participate and follow along with the activities. Professionals from Chevron and NASA attended and spoke to the students, tying in career pathways. Dr. Coleman discussed empirical data from the 2020 and 2021 Astro Camps. This data will be presented in a published research article as an experience in response to COVID-19.

The next topic discussed was the Director’s Retreat, which will bring together all nine Regional STEM Center directors from across the state. The first annual LaSTEM Director’s Retreat will take place on November 11, 2021, at the Northwestern State University CenLa Campus in Alexandria, Louisiana. Dr. Kristine Strickland, Chancellor at Fletcher Technical Community College, will serve as the facilitator. Discussion will include Act 392, goals, quarterly progress reports, and metrics.

Following conversations regarding the Director’s Retreat included development of a strategic plan, vision for populating the K-16 STEM pipeline, Director’s Retreat conversations to include industry involvement and colleges and universities making connections to K–12 and building the pipeline, metrics for the quarterly progress reports from the STEM Centers (including metrics that give indications of engagement levels) and the centers serving as a hub for local school districts and the community, weekly director’s meetings and future retreats, building a foundation by identifying points of contacts in all districts across K-12 schools, redesigning the LaSTEM website to be more interactive and share some of the metrics, mapping of consistent themes among higher education strategic plans as it relates to STEM and certain student populations, working with LDOE to define STEM, and the importance of community-based organizations and metrics associated with involvement.

Next, Dr. Coleman addressed the LaSTEM Summit which will be held on February 8, 2022, in person at the Raising Cane’s River Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He stated the theme for the Summit will be focused on Workforce and include an industry breakfast. The [Summit registration website](#) is active for attendees, presenters, and vendors, with over 120 attendees already registered. The call for presenters priority window is open until November 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition, he mentioned LaSTEM has a new Twitter handle, @GeauxLaSTEM. Last, Dr. Coleman stated the keynote speaker will be Dr. Steven Pearlman, Co-founder of the Critical Thinking Institute, and author of *America’s Critical Thinking Crisis: The Failure and Promise of Education*. His keynote lunch presentation is titled, “Solving for Academia’s Systemic Critical Thinking Crisis.” The Summit will include 30-minute presentations and two rooms for 1-hour, K-12 workshops which hold up to 75 participants.

Next, Dr. Coleman transitioned into the Regional STEM Network Center Report-Outs. Regions 1, 5, and 7 presented on the work in their areas:

- **Region 1**, presented by Daphne Barnes, stated their mission is “creating a region with a driving economy and the excellent quality of life for everyone.” GNOrocs (Greater New Orleans Region One Center for STEM) is an initiative of GNO, Inc. under the workforce development arm. A website will be coming soon for the public to access resources. The four major priorities, in conjunction with workforce development, were regional career exposure, identifying gaps within the STEM ecosystem, business and industry connection, and regional STEM brand & cataloging of resources/partners/programs. Initiatives included STEM Talks, HBCU STEM Connect internship program, W.I.S.E. Women, and GNO, Inc. x Son of a Saint Collaboration. Further

discussion included internship program numbers, specifically HBCUs in their pilot year, expansion of the programs, and accessing this information from the LaSTEM website.

- **Region 5**, presented by Mark Arseneault, stated they used the additional funds from the LaSTEM Advisory Council to hire a Project Coordinator, Daren Dotson, and an administrative assistant, Jordan Hafner. Their slogan was “Where learning is disguised as fun.” Region 5 initiatives included summer camps and programs, the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program, Vex Robotics, classroom robotics competitions, center visits in the form of field trips and school visits, and professional development opportunities for educators. Further questions and discussion included robotics as an elective/class, accessibility of information and resources for principals and teachers, robotics data, iPrep Academy North in Miami-Dade ([iprepnorth.com](http://iprepnorth.com)), and impacting school performance scores with STEM components.
- **Region 7**, presented by Beonica Rutherford-Frazier, welcomed everyone to North Louisiana as the host STEM Center Director for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarterly meeting. She introduced Dianne Clark as the executive director at Sci-Port Discovery Center, Dr. Heather Kleiner as Manager of Sponsored Programs, Jennifer Johnson as the coordinator for the LED Bridge Lighting Program, and Pam Atchison as the Director of the Shreveport Regional Arts Council. Region 7 initiatives included the LED Bridge Lighting Project, NLA STEM Alliance, and NSU Professional Development for Preschool Teachers. Council members thanked Ms. Rutherford-Frazier and her team for the tour and activities at Sci-Port Discovery Center.

### **Other Business**

Dr. Coleman acknowledged the 2022 quarterly meeting dates as follows:

- Thursday, January 20, 2022
- Thursday, April 28, 2022
- Thursday, August 18, 2022
- Thursday, November 17, 2022

Dr. Coleman introduced Ms. Kelly Martin-Rivers from NASA’s Office of STEM Engagement. She thanked everyone for implementing Astro Camps across the state. NASA served 16,000 students last summer. Two upcoming challenges include a higher education thrust takeout challenge which is targeted at developing a portable engine testing module and 3D design for a thrust takeout structure, and the next iteration of ROADS on Icy Worlds Challenge which will look at the atmosphere around Jupiter. In addition, she mentioned a minority-serving institution exchange where higher education institutions are identified in a database, which allows NASA to work with these minority-serving institutions. All of this information will be shared with Dr. Coleman.

*With there being no other comments or business, a motion to adjourn was made by Jean May Brett and a second by Dr. LaFargue. With all in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.*