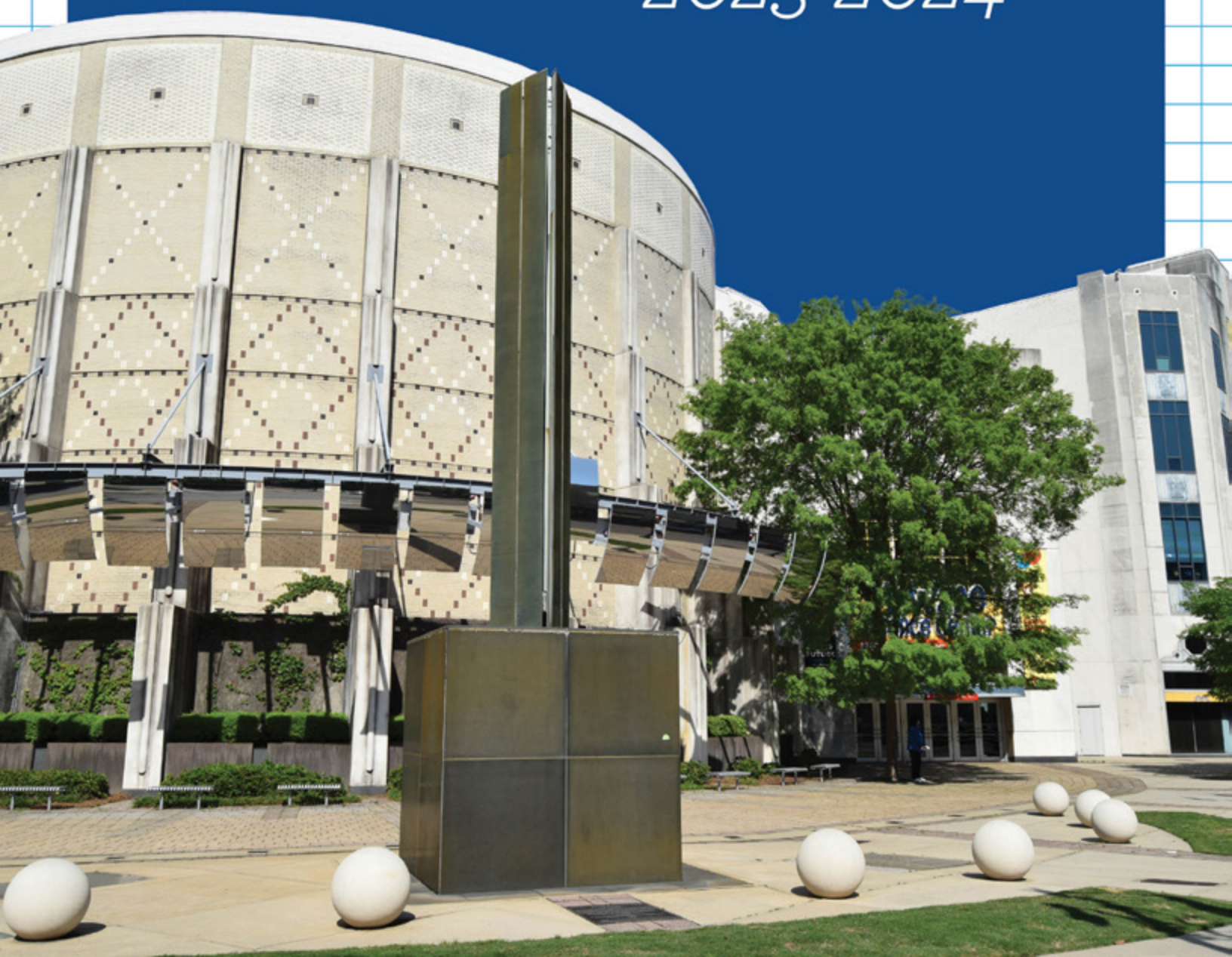




McWane Science Center

IMPACT REPORT

2023-2024



MISSION

McWane Science Center's mission is to spark wonder and curiosity about our world through hands-on science experiences.

VISION

Our vision is to excite and inspire inquiry and innovation through science.

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Letter from the President

So much has happened at McWane Science Center in the past year that it is hard to share it all in a single report. Each school year, tens of thousands of students visit McWane. They participate in demonstrations in the Rushton Science Theater, use engineering design principles in our Workshop, engage in facilitated STEM activities in our seven classrooms, and learn through our hands-on exhibits. Thousands more are served through our McWane on the Move program, which sends our educators into schools, community centers, and libraries across the State of Alabama. Our scholarship program, funded by foundations, corporations, and caring individuals, ensures that the learning opportunities offered by McWane are available to all students and teachers, regardless of their ability to pay. On weekends, McWane is a hub of family activities. Itty Bitty Magic City remains wildly popular with our youngest visitors, and family-centered activities take place throughout the building. Visitors enjoy documentary movies and feature films in our IMAX Dome Theater. Special days, like Big Machines Day or Sci Fi Day, happen throughout the year to add even more fun to a McWane visit. McWane is a place to play, to explore, to learn, and to grow. It is a place to build memories, to exercise your brain power, and to discover a new understanding about our world. While our dedicated staff members are amazing, none of it would be possible without your help. Whether you are a volunteer, a member, or a donor, your investment makes a difference in the lives of young learners every day. Thank you for all you do for McWane Science Center and the community we serve!

Amy M. Kempleton

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STEM Education

STEM Education at McWane Takes Many Forms

From our McWane on the Move outreach programs to our Design Labs in the museum, McWane is making science learning fun! We are also making science learning accessible. In the 2023/2024 school year, McWane served more than 300 Title I schools, many of those with scholarship dollars. To learn more about our Educational Programs, check out our Education Guide on our website.



The Impact of McWane Science Center's Outreach Programs

Two of our most successful initiatives for reaching our mission are *Celebrate Science* and *McWane on the Move*. These programs allow us to extend STEM education beyond our physical location, making a critical difference in underrepresented communities across Alabama.

Since its creation in 2006, *Celebrate Science* has engaged students and educators in a unique challenge: designing and building a prototype for a science center exhibit. Each year, nearly 500 students from schools across Alabama participate, competing in teams to bring their innovative ideas to life. This hands-on experience not only deepens their understanding of scientific concepts but also encourages creativity & teamwork. Most importantly, *Celebrate Science* is provided at no cost to participants,

ensuring that the benefits are accessible to all students. In addition, *McWane on the Move* offers educators and community groups the tools they need to bring science education into their classrooms, libraries, after-school programs, and beyond. Aligned with Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards, this initiative provides a range of activities tailored to annual lesson plans. Whether used in schools or parks, *McWane on the Move* helps create engaging learning environments that spark curiosity and foster a love of science in diverse settings. Together, these programs exemplify McWane Science Center's commitment to making STEM education inclusive and widely available, creating opportunities for all students to explore, learn, and thrive.



BY THE NUMBERS:



44,497 students visited for field trips. **21,518** of those were able to visit through the Education Scholarship Fund.

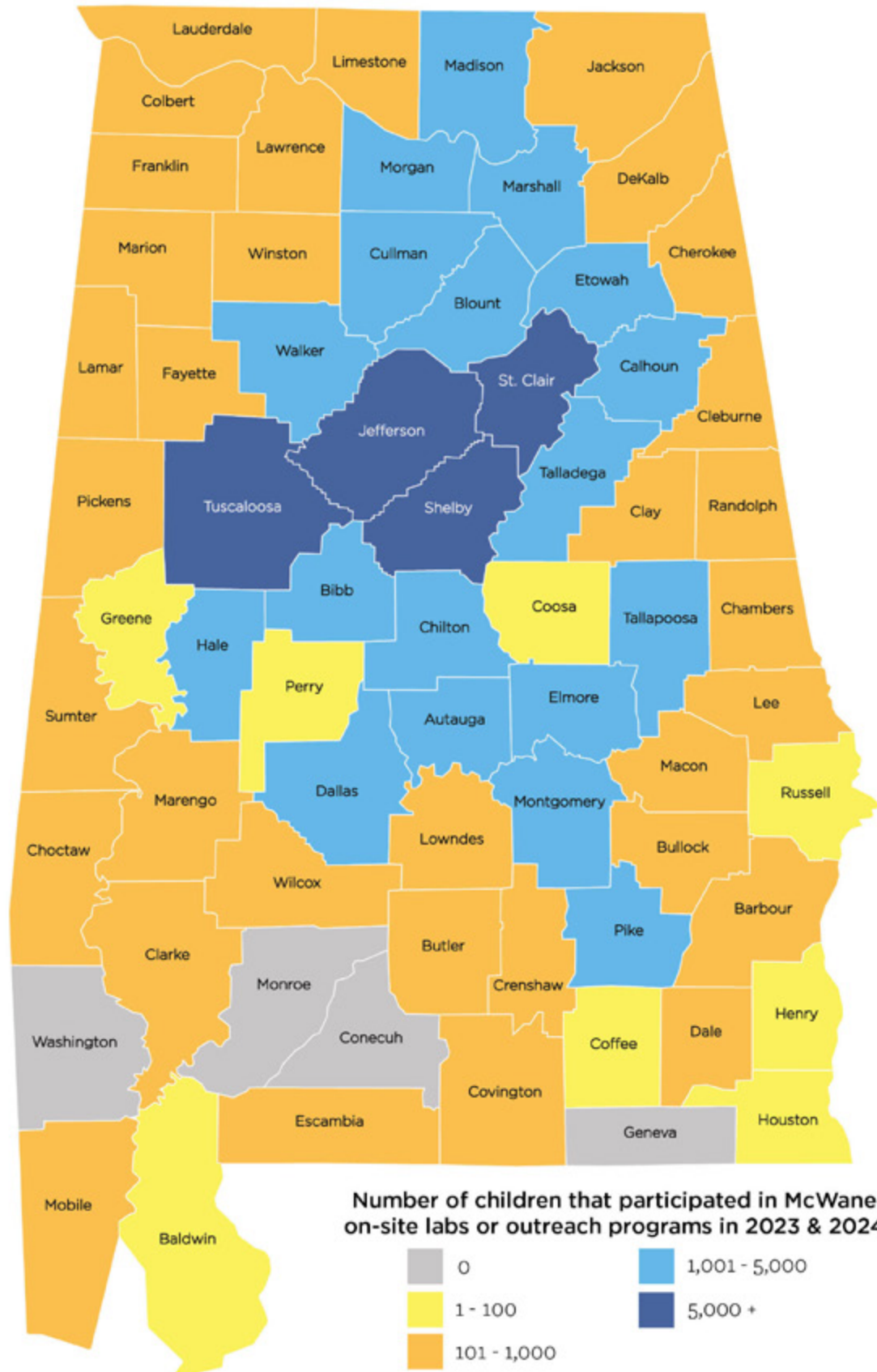


21,957 students participated in a *McWane on the Move* outreach program.



29,306 miles traveled by *McWaniacs* for outreach programs outside of Jefferson Co.

McWane Science Center Service Map





Leading STEM Education in Alabama

In March 2024, McWane Science Center hosted the inaugural meeting of the Central 6 STEM Learning Ecosystem, an initiative of the Alabama STEM Council. This statewide initiative, in collaboration with Teaching Initiative in STEM (TIES), aims to revolutionize STEM education and workforce development across Alabama. By forming local and regional STEM Learning Ecosystems, we're paving the way for a future where everyone has access to quality STEM learning opportunities.

McWane Science Center is proud to anchor the Central 6 STEM Learning Ecosystem, focusing on Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker counties. Together, this group will identify key challenges and opportunities that exist in our region, and outline solutions that will encourage STEM literacy, STEM career awareness, innovation, entrepreneurship, and workforce readiness among our young citizens.



We Love Our Volunteers

We believe that science is for everyone and want to create a world where everyone can use science to improve and enrich their lives and communities. Our volunteers are an integral part of our mission through the facilitation of STEM programming in an inclusive and engaging way and through behind-the-scenes maintenance and care.

IN 2023,
WE HAD 223 VOLUNTEERS,
SERVING 21,000 HOURS!

"I enjoy seeing guests participate in activities & discover the fun in engineering & science!"

- Abby, Science Engagement Volunteer

"I love volunteering at McWane because I always enjoyed visiting McWane as a child & learning so much about the science around me. Volunteering gives me the opportunity to share that joy & curiosity with others!"

- Anusha, Teen Leader Volunteer



Inside the Museum

2024 So Far

2024 has been an incredible year at McWane Science Center, marked by exciting growth and impactful achievements. From impressive attendance to expanding our educational programs, we've reached more communities than ever before. Take a look at the highlights that showcase how we've made science more accessible, engaging, and fun for all ages this year!



180,959

Admission Visitors

We welcomed many visitors from all over the country through our doors since the beginning of the year. The buzz of excitement within our exhibits and events this year truly highlights our commitment to making science enjoyable for all.



4

Special Exhibits

This year, we housed 4 special exhibits, 1 of which, *You Build It!*, was requested back by popular demand from our guests. We love being able to "wow" our guests with fresh and engaging exhibits.

1

New Exhibit

In August, we unveiled our newest exhibit, *Sharks, Skates, and Rays: Beneath the Gulf Waves*, which highlights our extensive collection of shark, skate, and ray skeletons. This has been an extensive project for our Exhibits and Collections Departments that we were happy to showcase during our Shark Weekend event.



50,030

IMAX Tickets Sold

Feature Films & Documentaries

(From Jan 1 - July 31)

19

Our IMAX Dome Theater has had a huge year so far. Some of that is due to several record-breaking movies coming to theaters. Our highest grossing so far has been *Twisters*, directed by Lee Isaac Chung.



40 Birthday Parties

We are always grateful to be a part of our guests' special days, especially birthdays!



576 Educational Programs

Not only does our Education Department work to service outreaches and field trips but they also help spark a love for science in all our visitors on the museum floor!



32 Special Days & Events

From Sci-Fi Day to McWane's own 26th Birthday Party, we've had some pretty great events this year!

Your Impact

The community's support of McWane Science Center allows us to provide field trips and on-site programming for Title I schools and organizations serving at-risk populations, McWane on the Move outreach programs for qualifying schools and organizations, need-based camp scholarships for families, and partnerships with organizations to conduct teacher professional development programs. When you give to McWane Science Center, you also help keep the animals fed, the pumps running and the exhibits open. We are grateful to our 2023 donors listed in this report.

To learn more about giving programs at McWane, call Margaret Ritchie (205) 714-8219 or email mritchie@mcwane.org.



Thank You to Our Donors

Marie Curie Society

Alabama Innovation Corporation, Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Regions Bank, Jefferson County Commission, City of Birmingham, State of Alabama, McWane Foundation

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