



# Growing STEM Programming at Marin County Free Library



## Start Simple and Grow Organically

MCFL started with "Science Month" in October 2010 featuring existing resources and minimal programming.

Over the next few years we expanded into paid performers and more home grown programming,



Science Month in October gave way to "Full S.T.E.A.M Ahead" with systemwide enthusiastic programming for children, teens and adults. Library staff now anticipates and is excited to plan for programs in a similar manner to Summer Reading.

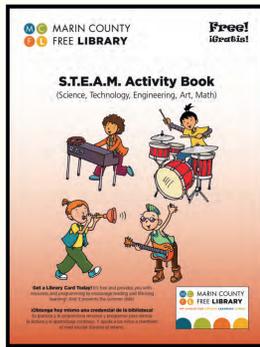


Science Programming continues year round and was incorporated into our Summer Reading Program in 2015 as it transitioned into Summer Learning.

Identify enthusiastic staff in system initially and invite others to participate as the programs grow. Invite staff to participate in events and experience the fun of science to get involved. Provide simple basic kits and programs that can be reused in other places.

### Focus on highly interactive programs:

- ◆ Simple Science Experiments
- ◆ Storytimes with Science Theme
- ◆ Maker Camp Activities
- ◆ Lego clubs



Clockwise: A simple science experiment. Our S.T.E.A.M Activity Book was developed and printed in Summer 2015. Lego Club and Maker Camp soldering kit.



## Have Fun and Experiment

Let staff explore an area of science they are enthusiastic about. They will cross pollinate.

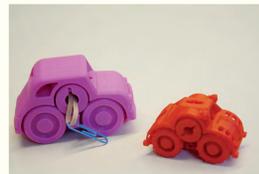


- ◆ 3D Printers
- ◆ Robots
- ◆ Fossils
- ◆ Earth Sciences
- ◆ Sharks
- ◆ Engineering Challenges
- ◆ Simple Crafts with Science

Keep adjusting and adapting the programs to suit changing needs. This will keep things interesting if presented a few times and provide fresh enthusiasm.

Focus on the participants and adapt to their needs to learn depending on level of experience.

Space is sometimes a challenge. Adapt programs to what will work best so everyone can enjoy the event. For example many library programs took place during hours the library was closed to the public, also consider conducting programs outside of the library.



Above: 3d printer and rubber-band 3d cars.



Clockwise: Robotics with Cubelets, Rubber-band car design challenge, simple crafts with science, a fossil and Megalodon's tooth.



## Build Partnerships in the Community

Get support of Administration, Library Friends, Foundations and other groups to provide support for needed resources.

Identify Community Groups involved in similar activities that will be mutually beneficial for everyone. MCFL has partnered with our local Novato School District to create joint use space for Maker Programs. MCFL has joined large events drawing thousands of people such as the, The Marin County Office of Education – Marinovators, The Marin County Fair, where we sponsored the STEAM Carnival and North Bay Science Discovery Days. MCFL has done popular science programming with the Bookmobile such as "Cubelets" robotics and Fossil day and also promoted the events to Library Patrons.



Having highly visible and stimulating programs at higher profile events will lead to invitations from other groups. Based on the success of other events MCFL was invited to the Charles Schultz Museum and AutoDesk's "Bring Kids to Work Day".

Attendees at events will be inquiring about Library related Science Events and say things like "Wow. I never knew the Library did cool things like this?"



Above: Autodesk's "Bring Kids to Work Day".

Right: MCFL at the Marin County Fair with Giganotosaurus.

