

## Schools Close and SFAFS Goes Virtual

This school year ended in a way none of us could have predicted due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In mid-March, the Santa Fe Public Schools (SFPS) closed abruptly, homes became classrooms, and students, teachers, and families had to adapt quickly to remote learning.



Less remarkable volunteers would have quit for the year. After all, our programs are hands-on. Instead, volunteers thought up new ways to support STEM learners in Santa Fe. We don't yet know when schools will reopen, but we know for sure that students --and their teachers--need more support than ever.

This is not business as usual. Here are a few highlights from this past school year and some new activities underway as our volunteers continue to inspire young STEM learners in Santa Fe.

## Before Schools Closed

### Building Young STEMists

More than 600 K-8 students at Nina Otero Community School (NOCS) applied their STEM knowledge and skills during the first year of our Adopt-A-School Program.

Kids used cyphers to crack secret codes, created water rockets and gadgets, mapped their place on earth, and explored how their bodies move through hands-on workshops led by our Adopt-A-School team.



Nina Otero grade 1-2 students built Goofy Gadgets to practice team-building and problem-solving skills.

**"My students had the great benefit of having a volunteer teach them, in our classroom setting, about New Mexico's water usage and conservation. They retained this information the rest of the year as they excitedly made connections to new information they researched." Ms. Brenda Dominguez, 3rd Grade Teacher, NOCS**

## Young Scientists at Work

More than 2,100 K-12 SFPS students got to discuss their STEM fair project with a real scientist, engineer, or other STEM professional at their school's STEM fair.

**"The judges would never give up on us!"**

*NOCs student*



Nina Otero Community School 4th & 5th grade students wear masks to promote their "Young Lungs at Work: No Idling" campaign, which they created for their school STEM fair project.

**"As a 2nd grade teacher, this was my first experience in the science fair realm. The SF Alliance for Science team provided so many learning opportunities for the students, but also for me. Students took great pride in their work, but were inspired even further when they heard that they would be judged by the scientists. Students were able to see that their work matters outside of the classroom. That is a powerful thing!!!"**

Ms. Jules Chavez, 3rd Grade Teacher, NOCS

## After Schools Closed

### SECRETS IN CODE



An Introduction to Cryptography  
Session #1

**Watch Secrets in Code**

#### STEM Video Topics:

*Secrets in Code ~ Morse Code ~  
How the Body Moves ~ Graphing ~  
Energy in Motion ~ The Water Cycle ~  
How the Eye Works ~ Calculating  
Averages ~ And more!*

### Adopt-A-School Goes Virtual

After schools closed, SFAFS volunteers adapted their experiential learning to an online venue. SFPS teachers and their students now have access to a growing library of STEM videos for their online classrooms and remote learning environments.

**"Using videos with local STEM experts helps to build community connections with our students. Our students need human interactions with familiar faces."**

*Ms. Jeri Lyn Salazar, NOCS K-8 Educational Leader & 21st Century Site Coordinator*

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- Celia Lipton Farris & Victor W. Farris Foundation
- Dollars 4 Schools
- Buckman Family Fund
- Susan & Conrad De Jong Fund



**Help us to inspire more young STEM learners  
by making a gift today!**

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