



W I S C O N S I N  
**SCIENCE FESTIVAL?**  
CURIOSITY UNLEASHED.

**2018**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**





## *Dear Friends,*

This is the **eighth year of the Wisconsin Science Festival**, and – like every year before – we are amazed at the enthusiasm of organizers who unleash curiosity in communities throughout our state. This year there was an event within an hour's drive of everyone in Wisconsin! And there was something for everyone, whether they visited a Universe in the Park program at one of our state parks, met our new mascot Beesly at Science on the Square in downtown Madison, checked out a lecture at a local public library, met an author from the Wisconsin Book Festival or participated in any of the nearly **300 events offered this year**.

We are humbled that a broad coalition of businesses, schools, universities, civic groups, libraries and museums come together each fall to make the festival happen. In addition to generous sponsors who make the festival financially possible, more than 150 organizations presented an event as part of the festival. This year's effort collectively reached 34,000 attendees.

Ultimately, though, the accomplishments of the Wisconsin Science Festival cannot be told with numbers. Instead, success is measured in stories of exploration. Families explore their interests while perusing a science expo. Scientists-in-training explore their communication skills while leading field trips for students. Adults explore their curiosity while learning from researchers at a local pub talk. Most importantly, we all get to explore the myriad of ways that STEM is present in everyone's life.

One local organizer put it simply: "Thanks for keeping science relevant for the general public."

To that we say: Thank YOU for all that you do to keep science relevant in your communities. We look forward to much collaboration to come!

Yours in curiosity,

### **Laura Heisler**

Director, Wisconsin Science Festival  
Director of Programming, Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation  
Director of Outreach, Morgridge Institute for Research

### **Eric Wilcots**

Chair, Wisconsin Science Festival Steering Committee  
Professor, Department of Astronomy  
Deputy Dean, College of Letters & Science  
University of Wisconsin–Madison



# About the Wisconsin Science Festival

The Wisconsin Science Festival is a statewide celebration of science, technology, engineering, art and math. With events encompassing hands-on science exhibitions, demonstrations, performances, pub nights, workshops and more, the festival truly offers something for everyone. We aim to inspire and engage everyone in the enterprise of science and discovery; to cultivate curiosity; to communicate the power of knowledge and creativity to change our world view; to promote innovation and to cultivate the next generation of global citizens. As a grassroots movement of enthusiasts throughout the state, the Wisconsin Science Festival is presented by a growing coalition of Wisconsin's science and arts communities each fall.





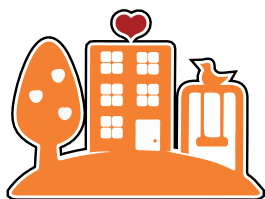
**4**  
Days



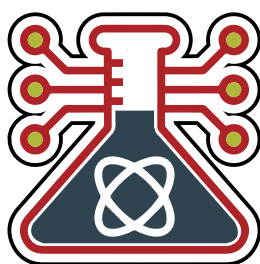
**294** Events



**33,545** Attendees



**72** Communities



**868**

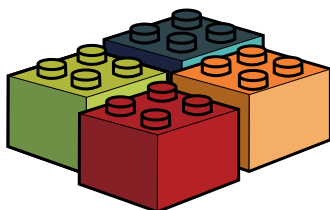
STEM professionals  
connecting with  
their community



**22**  
SPONSORS



**1,035**  
T-shirts



**82,000**

Legos® and compatible bricks sorted

**1,264**

Slices of pizza to feed

**473** volunteers



**SAY CHEESE!**

More **selfies** with **Beesly**  
than we can count



# SPONSORS

# 2018

The Wisconsin Science Festival would not be possible without the financial and in-kind contributions of our sponsors and partners. From providing funding to hosting events and serving as volunteers, thank you for making this annual Wisconsin tradition possible.

## GOLD SPONSORS

**ThermoFisher**  
SCIENTIFIC



## SILVER SPONSORS



## BRONZE SPONSORS



## COPPER SPONSORS

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Dupont | Madison.com | MGE Foundation | WMTV NBC 15 | Quarles & Brady LLP

## PRODUCERS



## PARTNER



# Thank you!





# #WiSciFest Press

**3.1 million**

impressions via mobile, online, radio, TV and print advertising

**32 news outlets**

reaching more than 2 million news and media website viewers

#WiSciFest webpages were viewed over

**50,000 times** the week of the festival



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*For the first time, a member of our staff traveled across Wisconsin to visit events and meet festival participants and hosts. The stories below are firsthand accounts from Wes Marner, the festival statewide coordinator.*

## Practicing Communication at HUHS in Hartford

Hartford Union High School was my first stop. Busloads of 8<sup>th</sup> graders filled classrooms staffed by 9<sup>th</sup> graders at teacher Kevin Martin's "Science Across the Curriculum" event. The older students presented projects completed as part of the integrated curriculum program that uses project-based learning to weave together subjects – much like today's interdisciplinary science efforts.

One enthusiastic presenter, Nathan, shared "you have to do a lot of presentations if you go through this curriculum." Nathan's younger audience recoiled at the idea of public speaking, but our 9<sup>th</sup> grade facilitator was emphatic: "If you don't learn to communicate, you won't get anywhere in life. This is an important skill!"

I couldn't agree more, Nathan!

## An Upset Stomach in Marshfield

Later, I found myself 160 miles away at the Marshfield Clinic Research Institute. There, the first floor atrium had been transformed into a bustling science expo filled with physician, researcher and staff volunteers.

"Have you ever puked before?" a doctor asked two students who were eyeing the activity from a distance. They nodded, smiled and moved closer. Soon, they were engrossed in an activity about antacids while exploring a rainbow of pH indicators.

I asked the students' mom what brought them to this event. "Well, both of my kids are in the STEM program in their school, but there's not much else where we live. We came here because it's some science we can do nearby."

She told me where they had driven from, and afterward I looked it up on a map. Their family had come nearly 80 miles - one way - to visit the science festival event in Marshfield.

## The Taxonomy of Curiosity in Wausau

My final stop on this trip was to the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum and their annual "Birds in Art" exhibit. As a biochemical engineer, I often get caught up in the technical aspects of science and the natural world, and the science festival helps me pause to appreciate the beauty that is intertwined with science.

A striking example was on display at the museum: *My name is Hubert and I am not an owl*. This life-like charcoal drawing depicts a young screech owl named Hubert along with the full scientific classification of his species. Hubert, though, had imprinted on humans at a young age and that informed the young owl's passage through life at a wildlife rescue in Illinois.



*Often, we think of STEM education in terms of how well we teach students to conduct science. One of the things I love most about the Wisconsin Science Festival? It can be a spark to inspire someone to become a scientist!*





W I S C O N S I N  
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136

Local organizers held events in

72

communities

### Events in...

40

Counties

20

Museums

17

Libraries

18

Science  
Pub Nights

12

UW System  
Campuses



**30% of organizers**  
say that WSF participation increases  
their usual attendance



**9 in 10 organizers** say that  
the festival is useful for  
their organization



**98% of sites**  
would consider being  
a part of the festival again





## EvalFest

The Wisconsin Science Festival is a member of EvalFest, a community of practice funded by the National Science Foundation to help evaluate the impact of science festivals nationwide.

**90%** of attendees surveyed reported the festival made them more aware of STEM in daily life

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**100%** of attendees surveyed reported the festival made them more aware of WI as a state making advances in STEM

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**100%** of attendees surveyed rated event as good or higher; 98% as very good or higher



## #WiSciFest Squared

### Local Businesses Partner to Create a Night of Strollable Science

Madison's Friday night hallmark event took science into the community with "Science on the Square." Dozens of venues on the capitol square in downtown Madison—including museums, pubs, stores and restaurants—hosted informal science talks, demonstrations or hands-on activities.

For example, Parthenon Gyros explored astronomy and offered rooftop stargazing while Fromagination delved into the science of cheesemaking. The Madison Children's Museum headquartered the event and hosted a variety of hands-on activities including a kickoff juggling demonstration that examined movement and the physics of human activities.

Beesly, the Wisconsin Science Festival's new mascot, led a "Pollination Promenade" around the square (posing for selfies along the way, of course), and hundreds of visitors took in a packed evening of other events.



Thanks to **MG&E** for bringing electric cars!

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Thanks to our Friday night sponsor!





**#WiSciFest Takes on Tantalizing Topics****Infectious Disease**

Signature events kicked off Thursday with “Big Ideas for Busy People: Contagion!” High-energy, five-minute flash talks and a ringing gong sounded throughout the packed room. This year, infectious disease experts set the stage for an interactive exploration of the future of viruses, bacteria, antibiotics and vaccines.

Thanks to our Thursday  
night sponsor!

**ThermoFisher**  
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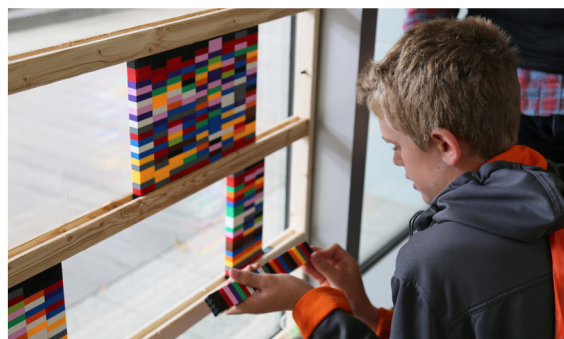
**Digital Data Display**

People of all ages, from Racine to Bayfield, contributed to a data visualization project titled, “What Color Is: Data stored in stacks of color.” Hundreds of participants created a personal color block stack based on color association questions.

? ? ? ? ?  
What color are your eyes ?  
? ? ? ?  
? Which color represents friendship or hope or justice ?

“I love how the Wisconsin Science Festival gets people so engaged in science by learning and by exploring and discovering. I think [this project] is a great example of that, where you take something that kids do at home—they build with bricks and Legos—and then imbue it with science. Now these little bricks become meaningful in a really rich way they probably weren’t before.”

- Karen Schloss, a UW–Madison faculty member  
and contributing researcher on the project





### Living in the Anthropocene

Dennis Dimick, former environment editor for National Geographic, joined other experts to explore the scale and implications of humanity's impact on earth and its systems.

### Origins Documentary Screening

How did complex life form? How did humans first learn to walk the Earth? In July 2017, UW-Madison sent a team to South Africa, the site of international collaborations investigating our origins. The Origins project was presented in a full-length feature for the first time on the big screen!



### Gastropod Live!

Are oysters really an aphrodisiac? Can you hack your taste buds? When did carrots become orange? In this special live performance of the podcast Gastropod, co-hosts Cynthia Graber and Nicola Twilley served up a three-course feast for our eyes and ears, including live experiments and interactive tastings.

### Discovery Expo

For four days, the Discovery Building was transformed into a wonderland of science to explore. Thousands of visitors experienced dozens of interactive, hands-on exploration stations ranging from virtual reality to health and medicine, chemistry, astrobotany and more!

- **196 Stations** over 4 days
- **2,700** field trip students
- **65 Groups** Represented
- **Thousands** more families!







# WISCONSIN SCIENCE FESTIVAL? CURIOSITY UNLEASHED.

## Top Ten Reasons to Host a **Wisconsin Science Festival** Event

1. Connect with new audiences
2. Build bridges between STEM role models and the community
3. Create unique experiences for school visits
4. Work with scientists honing their communication skills
5. Show off your work!
6. Experiment and try something new
7. Learn how other organizations are connecting with their communities
8. Raise the profile of STEM throughout Wisconsin by participating in this statewide movement
9. Showcase the intersection of science and the arts
10. Inspire curiosity in our fellow citizens!





From the local leaders who host events to the STEM professionals who share their passion for discovery and the volunteers who make it all happen, the Wisconsin Science Festival is ultimately powered by people. We are thrilled at the level of support that communities throughout Wisconsin lend to the festival and the hard work that they put in to creating sparks of curiosity in their audience.

## FOR DISCOVERY BUILDING

 **220**  
Volunteers

 **631**  
person-hours volunteered

## ALL FESTIVAL TOTALS

 **473**  
Volunteers

 **868**  
STEM professionals

 **532**  
Presenters

**1:40** ratio of STEM professionals to attendees

## Volunteer Profile

### Andrea ("Andy") Poulos

**Occupation:** Faculty Associate at UW–Madison in the ESL Program. I teach English writing courses, reading courses, grammar courses and speaking courses to academically admitted international students (both undergrads and grads) and do teacher training in the TESOL Certificate Program and with international TAs.

**Discovery Volunteer Experience:** Exactly five years. I started with the science festival in September 2013.

I love the breadth and energy of the Science Festival and seeing the pure wonder and delight on the kids' faces. The first time I saw this as a volunteer was coming around the circle and seeing a child in the soap bubble pool with a hula hoop bubble around her, but I've seen it with dry ice experiments, with touching snakes, with propelling homemade rockets, with pen forensics in a "crime scene," with dissecting owl pellets, with getting mini circuit boards to light up. Actually, the first time I saw that look was when I brought my extremely shy goddaughter to an event, and suddenly her little 4-year-old arm shot up to be a volunteer to dance about in front of a crowd in the role of a molecule. After that I decided I wanted to be part of moments like that for the broader community.





## STEERING COMMITTEE

### Eric Wilcots

Steering Committee Chair  
Deputy Dean, College of Letters and Science, UW-Madison

### Laura Heisler

Festival Director  
Wisconsin Science Festival

### Kevin Anderson

Science Education Consultant  
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

### John Baldacchino

Director  
Division of the Arts, UW-Madison

### Bram Daelemans

Director of Investor Networks  
Wisconsin Technology Council

### Rick Erickson

Bayfield High School

### Michael Harrison

Business Development Manager  
BioForward Wisconsin

### Michael Harryman

Director of Marketing and Communications  
Wisconsin Public Television

### Nancy Hoffman

Director  
Campus and Visitor Relations, UW-Madison

### Leslie Orrantia

Director  
Community Relations, UW-Madison

### Jeffrey Potter

Marketing Director  
Wisconsin Public Radio

### Samuel Rikkers

Executive Director  
Tiny Earth

### Arjun Sanga

President  
WiSys

### George Tzougros

Executive Director  
Wisconsin Arts Board

## FESTIVAL OPERATIONS

### Wisconsin Science Festival

Laura Heisler  
Festival Director

### Discovery Building Event Production

Becky Balistreri  
Shauna Baranczyk  
Jerrod Buckner  
Jeanene Ennis

### Coordinators

Samantha Mulrooney  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Dan Murphy  
Robot Zoo Coordinator  
Morgan Olson  
Field Trip Coordinator  
Travis Tangen  
Teacher Engagement Coordinator  
Val Blair  
Discovery Expo Coordinator  
Wes Marner  
Deputy Director and  
Statewide Coordinator  
Jo Withers  
Sponsorships

### Communications

Jacqui Fuller  
Courtnei Kopietz  
Chris Najdowski  
Brian Mattmiller  
Jim Mayfield  
Jeanan Yasiri Moe  
Sally Younger

### Intern Support

Mujahid Anuar • Ruth Brandt • Jake Braun • Ryan Carolan • Collin Dott • Ebenezer Fanibi • Kleah Fernandez • Matias Figari • Ethan Heroux • Ben Kaeder • Hannah Mrazsko • Matt O'Connor • Peter Rehani • Lauren Sanders • Kaylee Sadeghpour-Hess • Max Schleck • Allie Sukus • Jack Swanson • Casey Dezonnia

## ADDITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tiffany Kenney, Director, Central Madison Business Improvement District

The hundreds of local organizers who present festival events.  
The hundreds of presenters and volunteers who give their time.



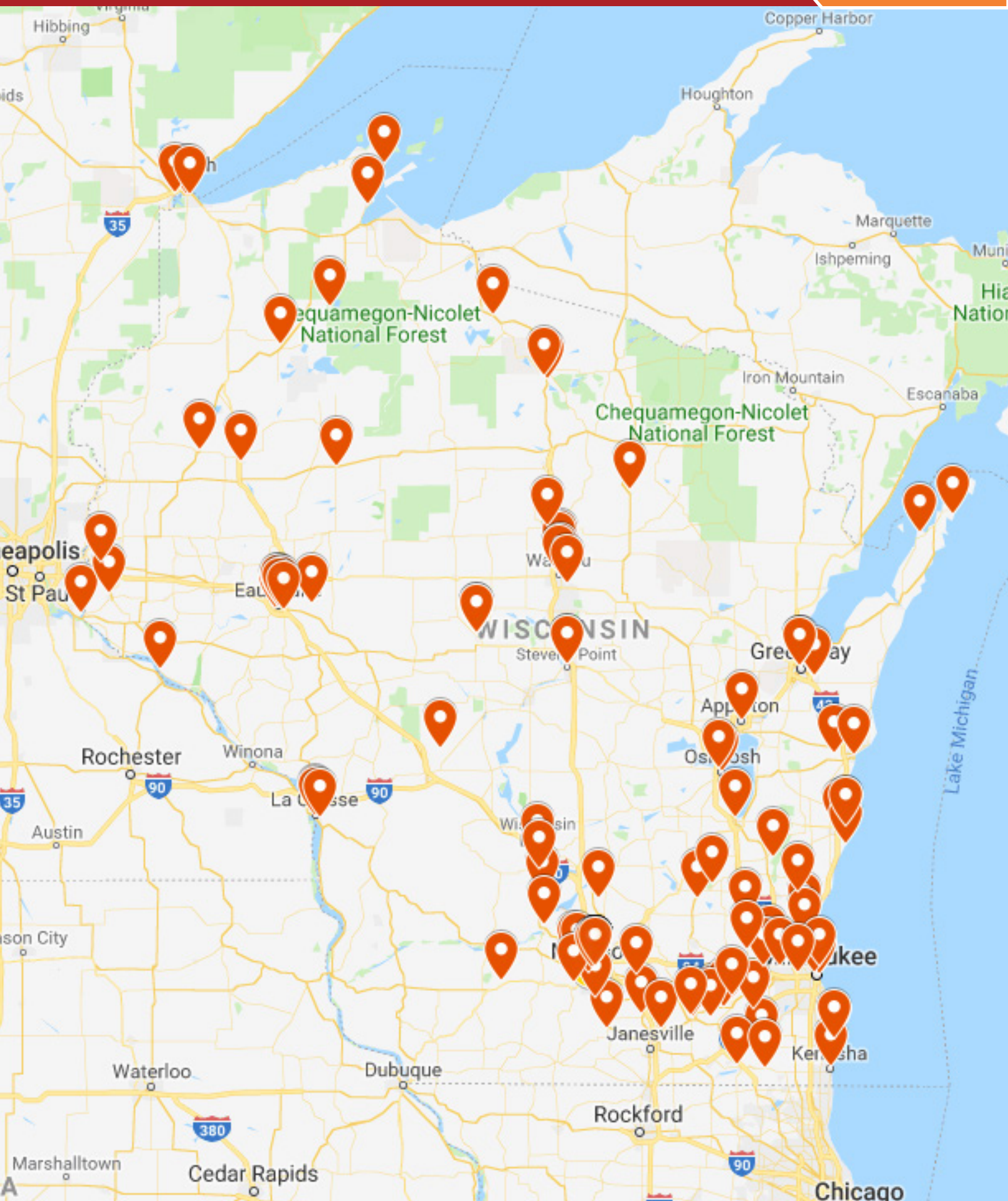
## STATEWIDE PARTICIPATING SITES

Above & Beyond Children's Museum	Hsu's Ginseng Enterprises Inc.	Rock River Archaeological Society
All of Us Research Program	Ice Age Trail Alliance	Rookery Pub and Fine Dining
Allen F. Blocher Planetarium	International Crane Foundation	Root River Environmental Education Community Center
Artisan Forge Studios – Fire and Sparks Facility	JavaVino	Rusk County Community Library
Babcock Hall Dairy Store	Kenosha Public Museum	Sauk City Public Library
Bayfield School District	Kettle Moraine State Forest - Northern Unit	SC Johnson
Beaver Creek Reserve	Kettle Moraine State Forest - Southern Unit	Schuster's Farm
Belleville Public Library	Kohler-Andrae State Park	Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts
Bellin College	L.R. Ingersoll Physics Museum	Sheboygan Children & Teen's Book Festival
Bookworm Gardens	La Crosse Science Cafe	Sherman & Ruth Weiss Community Library
Boulders Climbing Gym	Lake Geneva Public Library	South Shore Brewery
The Brink Lounge	Lake Superior Zoo	Square Wine Co.
Brocach Irish Pub & Whiskey Den	Lakeshore State Park	Steenbock's on Orchard
Building for Kids Children's Museum	Lazy Monk Brewing Co.	Students Participating In Chemical Education
Burlington Public Library	Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum	Superior Rotary
Cable Natural History Museum	Leif Everson Observatory	T.B. Scott Free Library
The Camera Company	Life Support Barbeque	Town Hall Library
Cameron Currie Lab	Lodi Public Library	UW-Eau Claire
Carpenter Nature Center	Lucky 7 Dog Rescue	UW-Eau Claire at Barron County
Casual Joe's	MacKenzie Center	UW-Madison Arboretum
Cedarburg Public Library	Madison Central Library	UW-Madison Astronomy Department
Chazen Museum of Art	Madison Children's Museum	UW-Madison Communications
Children's Museum of Eau Claire	Madison Gas and Electric	UW-Madison Dairy Cattle Center
Children's Museum of Fond du Lac	Madison Museum of Contemporary Art	UW-Madison Flight Simulation Laboratory
Children's Museum of Green Bay	Maiden Rock Bluff State Natural Area	UW-Madison Geology Museum
Children's Museum of La Crosse	Manitowoc County Historical Society	UW-Madison Parent and Family Program
Children's Theater of Madison	Marshfield Clinic Research Institute	UW-Milwaukee
City of Superior	Mayo Clinic Health System	UW-Milwaukee at Waukesha
Clary's Popcorn	McMiller Ski Trails Center	UW-Parkside
Colectivo Coffee	Mead Public Library	UW-Whitewater
Colossal Fossils Inc.	Mead Witter School of Music	UW-Whitewater Observatory
Copper Crow Distillery LLC	Mercer Public Library	Verona Public Library
D.C. Smith Greenhouse	Middleton Performing Arts Center	VomFass State Street
Death's Door Distillery	Middleton Public Library	Washburn Observatory
Devil's Lake State Park	Milton Public Library	Wausau Children's Museum
Discovery Outreach	Milwaukee Area Technical College	Wellspring Education Center & Organic Farm
Discovery World	Milwaukee Area Technical College Downtown Campus	Weston Elementary School
Dodge County 4-H	Minocqua Public Library	Wetherby Cranberry Company
Door County Brewing Co.	Modicum Brewing Co.	Wheatland Center School
Door Peninsula Astronomical Society	Monk Botanical Gardens	Willow River State Park
EAA Aviation Museum	Mukwonago Community Library	Wisconsin Alumni Association
Eager Free Public Library	Neuroscience Training Program	Wisconsin Book Festival
Edgerton Middle School	Neville Public Museum	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Einstein Project Makerspace	New Moon Cafe - Oshkosh	Wisconsin Earth Science Teachers Association
Evansville Nature Center	New Visions Gallery	Wisconsin ESL Institute
Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library	Newport State Park	Wisconsin Historical Museum
Fitchburg Public Library	Nezzy's Sports Bar & Grill	Wisconsin IceCube Particle Astrophysics Center
Forage	Northwoods Wildlife Center	Wisconsin Initiative for Science Literacy
Framing by Stengl	Old Railroad Segment - Langlade County	Wisconsin Maritime Museum
Frank L. Weyenberg Library	Oregon Public Library	Wisconsin Materials Research Science and Engineering Center
Friends of Willow River and Kinnickinnic State Parks Inc.	Oshkosh Public Museum	Wisconsin National Primate Research Center
Fromagination	Overture Center for the Arts	Wisconsin Union Theater
Galaudet Gallery	Parthenon Gyros	WisPolitics.com
Gundersen Health System	Pauline Haass Public Library	WUD Film Committee
H.H. Bennett Studio	Peninsula State Park	The Yoga Room
Hartford Union High School	Pewaukee Public Library	
Henry Vilas Zoo	Phipps Center for the Arts	
Horicon Marsh Education and Visitor Center	Ridgeway Pine Relict State Natural Area	
	River Falls Public Library	



# STATEWIDE SITES

2018





*Save  
the  
Date*



**October 17-20, 2019**