Connecting to Community: Using Partnerships to Reach Historically Excluded Groups

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Introductions

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Agenda:

- Ice Breaker
- Overview of SEAL Project
- Why STEAM in Libraries?
- Developing Partnerships
- Partnerships for Solar Science Programs
- Q&A and Discussion
Icebreaker

Big Sun, Small Moon?
Sun...Moon...You!

Annular Solar Eclipse: October 14, 2023
Total Solar Eclipse: April 8, 2024
Funding from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to provide:

- Approximately 5,000,000 eclipse glasses to public libraries in the U.S., D.C. and territories/protectorates
- In-person training in each state/territory
- Circulating kits to state libraries, including solar telescopes
- Training (in-person and online)
- An interactive community hosted on the STAR Net website

The existing STAR Net community will provide:

- Access to the interactive community
- Vetted hands-on activities through the STEM Activity Clearinghouse
- Access to scientists, volunteers and eclipse subject matter experts (SMEs)
STE(A)M Ecosystems

Libraries are part of community learning ecosystems.
Create opportunities for a STE(A)M-focused Institution

Create opportunities for learning outside of school.

From Ecosystems Framework and Evidence of Impact: Assessing the Impacts of STEM Learning Ecosystems
Why Libraries?

- 70% of the US population visits their local public library at least once a year
- Demographics at library programs on average are a 1:1 match with demographics outside the door
- Librarians are well educated and trained professionals who are comfortable trying new things and sharing results
- Libraries are safe spaces in the community providing:
  - Support in accessing government services
  - Free safety resources (classes, books, etc) for parents
  - A place for homeless patrons to rest safely
  - Translation services
  - Gathering places for cultural groups
What does STAR Net do?

- Exhibits
- Kits
- Professional Development
- Community Dialogues
- Partnership Guidance
- SME Matchmaking
- Events
- Interactive Activities
- Facilitation Strategies
- Resource Dissemination
- Eclipse Glasses!
Partnership Discussion

How to leverage partnerships from your community for your community
Why do we care about Partnerships, especially for underserved groups?
Community Asset Mapping
What is Asset Mapping?

Asset Mapping is a group exercise which enables members of a community to examine their community from an outside perspective.

- It helps you think positively about the place in which you live and work, producing a common view of what is considered important in the community.
- It also challenges you to recognize how other people see and experience the same community and space.
- It is the starting point for strategic planning because it identifies what assets the community has and how they might be utilized in the future.

It’s a way to assess and mobilize what a community already has collectively
What is a Community Dialogue?

• A Community Dialogue is a loosely facilitated discussion that provides the opportunity for staff and community members to discuss a common, community-based challenge or aspiration.
  • Climate Change
  • Serving Underrepresented Audiences
  • Working with Local Industry
  • Identifying Local Health Concerns
  • Pandemics
  • Programmatic support
How do I reach out?

- Emails and calls; cold approach may be all you have
- Use your network
- Ensure everyone is comfortable with the dynamics of virtual if using
- If there is someone you really want such as a mayor, commissioner, school leader, etc., find the person they can’t say “No” to.
Dialogue Ground Rules

1. Have a “kitchen table” conversations with no head of table. Everyone participates; no one dominates.

2. There are no “right answers.” Draw on your own experiences, views and beliefs. You do not need to be an expert.

3. Keep an open mind. Listen carefully and try hard to understand the views of those who disagree with you.

4. Help keep the discussion on track. Stick to the questions; try not to ramble.

5. It is okay to disagree, but don’t be disagreeable. Respond to others how you want to be responded to.

6. Have fun!
What other strategies/tools have you used to develop partnerships/reach underrepresented groups?
Work Time

• Discuss with your table the partners in your community

• Work on your own to develop either an asset map or Community Dialogue Idea

• Share-out
Thank you!

Any Questions?