

Asombro Insights

Science education for eager minds

A Quarterly Newsletter

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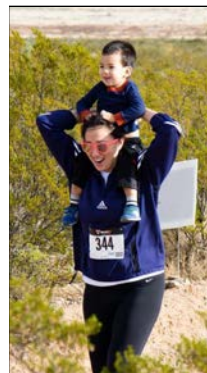
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Dashing Through the Desert

While many people were still sleeping on Saturday, November 11, more than 300 runners and 50 volunteers were preparing for a busy day at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park for the Desert Dash 5K, 10K, Half Marathon, and 1-Mile Children's Trail Race.

In addition to challenging themselves with 1-mile through 13.1-mile races, runners were also supporting Asombro's science education mission. All proceeds from the race help Asombro provide engaging science programs, including field trips where students experience the same trails enjoyed by Desert Dash runners.

The Asombro Institute for Science Education would like to thank our dedicated volunteers, generous sponsors, and brave runners for making the fifth Desert Dash our biggest and best ever.



Desert Dash Sponsors

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Luminarias

If you've never seen luminarias lighting up a beautiful desert trail surrounded by creosote bush and stars, you are in for a treat on **Friday, December 8th**, from 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park. Free!

Join the Asombro Institute for Science Education at one of our staff members' favorite events. Hundreds of luminarias light up the Desert Discovery Mini-Trail at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park. Enjoy holiday treats provided by Donna Yargosz and her "cookie posse," sing Christmas carols, and warm up by the fire pit. We'll also have science-related gifts you can purchase for everyone on your holiday gift list.



More than 300 luminarias light up the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park's trail.

Wonder Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service

Each quarter, Asombro will present the *Wonder Award* as a small token of our appreciation for the incredible volunteers who give so generously to help our organization thrive.

The first Wonder Award goes to a group of amazing ladies from the Greater Federated Women's Club Progress Club of Las Cruces: **Marion Fisher, Jean Frizzell, Lynn Mulholland, Inge Peter, and Susan Vantress**. The Progress Club has supported Asombro for more than a decade, and these five members have gone above and beyond to assist with classroom programs, public events, and behind-the-scenes work to make all of our programs go smoothly. You'll always find them laughing and working at monthly volunteer work sessions at the Asombro office. We're so grateful that these WONDER-ful ladies share their time and talents with us!



Susan Vantress, Jean Frizzell, Lynn Mulholland, and Marion Fisher - recipients (along with Inge Peter) of the Wonder Award.

Education Programs

Thanks to your support, Asombro staff provided 889 hours of science for 19,778 students through November 2017! Here are the programs from the third quarter of the year.

7-Jul Tularosa Public Library - animal adaptations	7-Sep Zia MS - Carbon Cycle	22-Sep Tombaugh - Desert Stories
8-Jul Jose Cisneros Public Library - Seeds on the Move	7-Sep Sierra MS - Carbon Cycle	25-Sep Camino Real MS - Carbon Cycle
17-18 Jul New Mexico Climate Champions teacher workshop	8-Sep Sierra MS - Field Trip	26-Sep Lynn MS - Radiotelemetry
22-Jul El Paso Main Library - Seeds on the Move	11-Sep Riverside Elem. - Science Interns	26-Sep Tombaugh - Desert Stories
2-Aug E. Picacho Elem. - Watch It Grow	11-Sep Lynn MS - Carbon Cycle	27-Sep Rockhound State Park - New Mexico Symbols
10-Aug White Sands School - Family Day	14-Sep Riverside Elem. - Desert Stories	28-Sep Picacho MS - Carbon Cycle
10-Aug Native Plant Society of NM - El Paso Chapter	14-Sep Sierra MS - Carbon Cycle	28-Sep NMSU Science Methods class
19-Aug Butterfly Flutterby	15-Sep Riverside Elem. - Science Interns	28-Sep Tombaugh - Desert Stories
24-Aug Sonoma Elem. - Owl Pellets	15-Sep Sierra MS - Carbon Cycle	28-Sep LC Catholic - Science Interns
25-Aug J Paul Taylor Acad. - Food Web	18-Sep Riverside Elem. - Science Interns	29-Sep Picacho MS - Carbon Cycle
28-Aug J Paul Taylor Acad. - Color & Camouflage	18-Sep Vista MS - Carbon Cycle	
29-Aug Mesa MS - Carbon Cycle	19-Sep Riverside Elem - Science Interns	
29-Aug J Paul Taylor Acad. - Bird Beak Adaptations	20-Sep LC Catholic - I'm A Scientist, Too, Numbers & Counting	
6-Sep Zia MS - Carbon Cycle	20-Sep Crossroads - Carbon Cycle	
	21-Sep Tombaugh - Desert Stories	
	22-Sep Camino Real MS - Carbon Cycle	

Asombro is on track to break an education record of reaching more than 20,000 students in one year!

NM Science Standards

On November 14, 2017, the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) published the final rule about new science education standards that will become effective next year. These “NM STEM-ready science standards” consist of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) with six additional standards focused on New Mexico.

Asombro considers this decision a huge win for New Mexico students. Next Generation Science Standards were developed by hundreds of scientists and educators through an open, peer-reviewed process lasting several years. The standards encourage teaching science across three, integrated dimensions: scientific practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts (like energy) that span all science disciplines. New Mexico becomes the nineteenth state to adopt the standards in full.

The first set of standards proposed by the NMPED made controversial changes to NGSS, including changes to standards about evolution and climate change. Asombro joined hundreds of scientists, educators, and citizens at a public hearing in Santa Fe in October to oppose these changes.

Asombro has been aligning our programs to the Next Generation Science Standards for several years. We are now ready to use our experience to assist schools throughout the state as they transition to these quality science education standards.

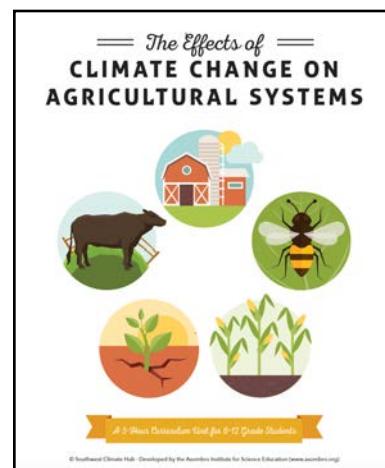
Asombro Releases New Curriculum Unit

Educators from around the world can cover key science topics using the lens of food and agricultural systems with Asombro’s new curriculum unit: **Climate Change and Agricultural Systems**. In partnership with the USDA Southwest Climate Hub, Asombro released this five-hour unit for 6th-12th grade students.

Lessons guide students through hands-on experiments, games, and data analysis activities to learn about the challenges of growing food in changing climate conditions. Asombro staff debuted the new unit with New Mexico educators in October at the NM Science Teachers Association conference.

The new unit and all associated files are available for free at:

bit.ly/AgUnit



THANK YOU!

We are grateful to the generous donors in the third quarter of 2017.

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FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION

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The Rainkeepers by Sharbani Das Gupta

The beauty of the Chihuahuan Desert is now supplemented by a new art installation at Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park amphitheater. From local artist Sharbani Das Gupta’s description:

The pipes plumb the skies capturing clouds and rain, and reference the industrial age of extraction and utilization of natural resources. The abacus references our propensity to calculate and divide scarce resources that belong to no one person alone. The idea touches on the fragility of our ecosystem, our dependence on it and the need for a wise, humane approach to life and the planet.



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Asombro Institute for Science Education!

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