



Annual Report 2006 - 2007

Another exciting year for Explore-It-All!

We have just completed our fifth year traveling "**Building Bridges**" and are pleased with the continued increase in the number of students we have been able to reach, as reflected by the numbers below.

2002-2003	# 26 Schools / 2,074 Students
2003-2004	# 37 Schools / 2,979 Students
2004-2005	# 39 Schools / 3,017 Students
2005-2006	# 41 Schools / 3,083 Students
2006-2007	# 46 Schools / 3,467 Students

Additionally, our first full year traveling the **Explore-It-All....In Space Planetarium** program has been enthusiastically received by 29 new schools, reaching 1,992 students.

* Our total for the 2006-2007 Year: 75 Schools / 5,459 Students

For the fourth consecutive year, we have been able to provide financial assistance to schools that have a large portion of their student body considered to be "at-risk". Grants have been generously provided once again by Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church and the Shugar Foundation. These funds provide Scholarships for students that would otherwise be unable to afford participating in programs such as ours. In turn, the financial burden would be placed on the schools to cover their cost. It is these students that have the greatest need for enrichment programs such as **Building Bridges** and **Explore-It-All....In Space**. We are grateful to BHPC and the Shugar Foundation for providing funding for these students. Our ability to reach an increased number of students each year is very exciting. At the conclusion of this school year, we do have some monies set aside to be used for the fall of 2007-2008.

2003-2004	BHPC	\$200	# 34 students / 2 Schools
2004-2005	BHPC	\$500	# 84 students / 5 Schools
2005-2006	BHPC	\$500	Shugar Foundation \$2,000 #398 students / 16 Schools
2006-2007	BHPC	\$500	Shugar Foundation \$2,500 #445 students / 21 Schools

Without exception, the programs have been welcomed enthusiastically by students, teachers, and administrators. We left a positive impression about the fun and challenges involved in science and engineering. Some schools not only had us scheduled for the **Building Bridges** program, but had us return later in the year with our **Planetarium**. It is fun to arrive at a school and have current sixth graders recognize our van as we are

unloading, recalling the fun that they had the year before doing **Bridges**. Or return to a school to set up the **Planetarium** for 4th graders, and have 5th graders that had participated in **Bridges** earlier in the year voice disappointment, at not getting to take part in this program as well.

With the revenue generated through our school visits at \$5 and \$6 per student, we were able to cover all of our direct costs associated with the programs this year. These include paying two facilitators to travel with the program, vehicle operation, insurance, rental of a small storage unit as well as administrative expenses. Our goal of having these outreach programs become a self-sustaining part of **Explore-It-All** has been attained!

In 2002 we purchased a 2003 Dodge Ram van to serve as our transport for the *Express* portion of our operation. Thanks to the generous contribution of \$5,000 in April 2006 by Dr. Lucy McFadden, we were able to pay off the remainder of the loan on the vehicle this past November. We are also very fortunate to have on going contributions from Sarah Alexander once again this year that help a great deal with the “extras” for our programs.

We continue to be grateful that the Montgomery County Public Schools Science Department values the programming that we are bringing to their students. Their new Science Coordinator invited us once again to present our programs at three Science Liaison Teachers meetings this past winter. It was very satisfying to hear her highly recommend our programs as a “valuable enrichment opportunity” that should be taken advantage of by the county teachers. Because we intentionally complement the Maryland State Voluntary curriculum, she could point to us as an additional tool to be utilized in the learning process.

It was a pleasant realization this past fall to find that the District of Columbia Public Schools has not only hired a Science Coordinator, but has actually adopted Science Standards for all grade levels. We have begun to develop a relationship with that office and were subsequently invited to present a **Planetarium** program for a few of their Science teachers this spring. It is a beginning and it is because of these new factors that we were invited to bring our programs to 4 D. C. schools this year.

Both of these connections are excellent avenues for us to inform teachers in the metropolitan area about the programming that **Explore-It-All** has to offer. Additionally, we have been fortunate enough this past year to have Debbie Dine of [Bethesda Design Web](#) join our efforts as our volunteer web designer. Most recently, she has updated our site with the intention of bringing it to a higher level of functionality by the fall. This has become an invaluable source of information for teachers looking for opportunities for their students, so keeping it current is essential. Please visit www.Explore-It-All.org to see our updated web site.

Our efforts for this past year have been primarily focused on launching our **Planetarium** program, specifically fine tuning age appropriate lessons to be used for a variety of grade levels. We have been overwhelmed with the enthusiastic reception from teachers already, when in fact the Space Science unit will not even be put into the County curriculum until this next school year. Additionally, there is great deal of interest in our **Robotics** portion of this project. The engineering aspect being developed will incorporate the design, construction and testing of a robotic space vehicle that will use a variety of end-effectors to complete a given mission. The robotics activity will dovetail with Montgomery County’s two other Science units on Magnets & Motors, and Electric

Circuits. It is our hope to be able to raise the remaining \$10K in order to complete **Explore-It-All....In Space** with this **Robotics** component.

Many of you I am sure, are aware of the closing of the Hands-On Science program here in Montgomery County. For the past 25 years, they have provided very valuable opportunities for young people to enjoy low key involvement in after school science classes. Our commonalities with Hand-On Science, are that we value informal science education, and we are attempting to stimulate a similar age group of students. Where we differ is in our approach and mechanism for reaching students with these science and engineering activities. HOS felt strongly, and we agree, that the culture has changed on two fronts which have been to their detriment over the past few years. First, they were finding it hard to compete with the many other activities in kids' lives, as a once a week after school program. Secondly, with the informal nature of their classes, measurement of the learning taking place was difficult. In today's culture, with such a great emphasis being placed on standards, this was proving to be a tremendous pitfall. **Explore-It-All**, on the other hand, intentionally develops informal science and engineering Learning Labs as an extension of the formal curriculum, so that the learning taking place is clearly connected to standards of learning for the students. Additionally, because our current outreach efforts provide enrichment opportunities and take place during the school day, they are viewed differently in terms of a time commitment.

Once again, without the support of the many individuals who have committed their time and or/financial resources, **Explore-It-All** would not be able to continue growing its efforts to bring informal science and engineering education to the children in the Washington Metropolitan area. Our outreach efforts are providing us with the ability to have the ongoing presence that is necessary as we advance toward our vision of a permanent center.

It is with gratitude that we would like to sincerely thank all of the individuals and organizations for their commitment to the ongoing development of **Explore-It-All Science Center**. We look forward to their continued support!

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