



Science Center and Museum Programs Endorsed in White House Maker Faire, Presidential Proclamation on Maker Movement

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), an organization representing nearly 500 science centers and museums in all 50 states and 46 countries around the world, applauds President Obama’s support of the Maker Movement, Maker Faires, and Maker Spaces, demonstrated by the recent convening of the first-ever White House Maker Faire (www.whitehouse.gov/maker-faire) and the Presidential Proclamation to recognize June 18, 2014, as National Day of Making (www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/17/presidential-proclamation-national-day-making-2014).

ASTC shares President Obama’s call to advance programs nationwide that encourage a new generation of makers and manufacturers to share their talents and hone their skills. In this connection, ASTC appreciates the endorsement of the Obama Administration for the many current and planned programs in science centers and museums all across the nation. Science centers and museums are at the forefront of the effort to inspire more people to become entrepreneurs and to pursue careers in design, advanced manufacturing, and the related fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

In conjunction with the White House Maker Faire, President Obama announced wide-ranging activities involving federal agencies, the private sector, and academia to further energize the Maker Movement and inspire young innovators in communities everywhere. Adding to these initiatives, ASTC has conveyed directly to President Obama a sampling of the diverse portfolio of Maker programs at ASTC institutions, many with the specific endorsement and support of mayors and other local leaders. ASTC science center and museum members conduct successful Maker Faires in their communities; lead workshops which stimulate STEM learning through hands-on participation; inspire visitors to design, make, and play through programs and exhibitions; teach educators how to engage students in the skills that current education programs neglect; and have created unique Maker Spaces within and outside their museums, including one which operates in a middle school.

ASTC/TECNA, "Making It Real"

ASTC is also grateful for Obama Administration endorsement of a new initiative entitled **"Making it Real"** to facilitate more informal STEM learning experiences at science centers and museums while, at the same time, drawing young students closer to the individuals and organizations that are the targets of their growing interests in science. This new initiative is the product of a recently approved cooperative agreement between ASTC and the Technology Councils of North America (TECNA), an organization that represents 50 IT and technology trade organizations that, in turn, represent more than 16,000 technology-related companies in North America. This initiative builds upon the successful work of both organizations, while simultaneously supporting the Administration's desire to heighten awareness of—and commitment to—the importance of "making" and "tinkering." The considerable effort devoted to promoting hands-on science learning and its potential to spark creative innovation and entrepreneurship must be sufficiently matched by an equivalent engagement of the many entrepreneurial companies that exemplify the productive results of this focused learning. Clearly, the experiences of these companies and the individuals who have turned scientific ideas into realities are highly inspirational and are absolutely critical to the message of hands-on science for productivity and workforce development.

ASTC and its members will be working with those agencies and organizations whose new initiatives were highlighted by President Obama during today's White House Maker Faire. ASTC-member museums will continue working with their mayors on championing the Maker Movement in their communities. The Association once again congratulates the President on their continued commitment to such an important issue, one which has valuable impact on the future productivity of our nation's youth.

About ASTC

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is a global organization providing collective voice, professional support, and programming opportunities for science centers, museums, and related institutions, whose innovative approaches to science learning inspire people of all ages about the wonders and the meaning of science in their lives. Through strategic alliances and global partnerships, ASTC strives to increase awareness of the valuable contributions its members make to their communities and the field of informal STEM learning. Founded in 1973, ASTC now represents over 650 members in nearly 50 countries, including not only science centers and museums, but also nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, and natural history and children's museums, as well as companies, consultants, and other organizations that share an interest in informal science education. For more information about ASTC, or to find a science center near you, visit www.astc.org.

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