



Over 1,600 Science Center Leaders to Gather in Raleigh for ASTC Annual Conference

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Raleigh, North Carolina will welcome more than 1,600 leaders of the global science center community, representing 38 countries, October 18-21 for the 2014 Annual Conference of the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC). ASTC 2014 will be hosted by the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and held at the Raleigh Convention Center and the Raleigh Marriott City Center.

This conference will once again be the premier professional development opportunity for the global science center community. Highlights of this year's event include:

- More than **110 concurrent educational sessions**, on topics as diverse as leadership, education and programming, exhibits and environments, development and member relations, innovations in science and technology, community engagement and outreach, applications of research and evaluation, and more.
- An **opening keynote address** on Saturday, October 18, by **Dr. Hayat Sindi**, UN Science Ambassador and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, and recent awardee of the Clinton Global Initiative.
- A **keynote presentation** on Monday, October 20, by artist, scientist, community organizer, and TED Fellow **Angelo Vermeulen**.
- The **ASTC Exhibit Hall**, open for two days and filled to the brim with **over 140 exhibitors** representing a wide range of products and services.
- The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences will open its doors on Tuesday, October 21, for **Museum Open House Day**, which will include presentations, special tours, and behind-the-scenes access to the National Medal-winning institution. Also on Tuesday, the latest giant screen films will be shown at Marbles Kids Museum for **Museum Cinema Day**, sponsored by the Giant Screen Cinema Association.

With more than 95 million visits worldwide each year, science centers are sites for informal learning, and are places to discover, explore, and test ideas about science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), serving families, schoolchildren, homeschoolers, teachers, and citizens. They play a valuable role within their communities, serving as a hub for learning, exploring, and engaging. Science centers encourage the innate curiosity that resides in all of us, providing opportunities for education, awareness of social and global issues, even recreation.

For more information on ASTC's 2014 Annual Conference, visit conference.astc.org.

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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