



The Future of Mississippi Is Here!

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Mississippi Science Fest Presented by C Spire to Celebrate STEM

Jackson, Mississippi...The 2018 Mississippi Science Fest (MSF) presented by C Spire, launches September 21-22nd in Jackson, Mississippi's **LeFleur Museum District (LMD)**. The LeFleur Museum District includes the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, the Mississippi Agriculture & Forestry Museum, the Mississippi Children's Museum, and the Museum of Natural Science. Leaders from the LMD organized the event to showcase the Magnolia State's innovative **science, technology, engineering and mathematic (STEM)** industries and organizations! LMD is seeking coverage from all media outlets for interviews, pre-event and day-of coverage.

LMD President and Marketing Director of Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, Andrea Patterson states, "We are anticipating a wonder-filled experience for the 3rd Annual Mississippi Science Fest in the LeFleur Museum District. This partnership provides a way for our museums to work together to host an event unlike anything we could do on our own. Because of sponsors like C Spire who invest in our communities, the MS Science Fest can take place at an affordable cost for families and showcase STEM activities in a fun, hands-on and playful environment."

The Mississippi Science Fest aims to **engage students, families, adults and educators in a fun and interactive environment** providing **science education, workforce development and a glimpse into Mississippi's future**. MSF will offer special **exhibitors, events and programs** that celebrate STEM and illustrate the vital role that Mississippians serve in these fields.

STEM-themed field trips will be available for school groups at each museum on Friday, September 21st. On Saturday, September 22nd visitors can purchase one \$10 ticket and visit all four museums for the day! There will also be nearly 100 science-related organizations from across the state, food trucks, a shuttle between museums, and hands-on science activities for visitors. **A full schedule of activities for the festival and tickets can be found at www.mssciencefest.org**. Tickets can also be purchased on the day of September 22nd at any participating museum.

C Spire, MSF's presenting sponsor, recognizes the importance of technology education and increasing Mississippi's digital literacy and technical workforce. "At C Spire, we believe that some of the world's brightest future scientists, engineers, mathematicians and creative thinkers will come from Mississippi," said Hu Meena, C Spire CEO. "That's why we are so excited to present our home state with a festival designed to encourage technology education and inspire our future workforce."

INSPIRATION FOR THE MS SCIENCE FEST

In 2016, with support and assistance from The Franklin Institute’s Philadelphia Science Festival team, the Mississippi Children’s Museum piloted the first MS Science Fest. They hosted 23 exhibitors from across the state and saw over 600 visitors to the one-day event. In 2017, working together, the four museums of the LMD hosted nearly 100 businesses and agencies and had over 3,300 visitors. Reflecting on the success of the past two years, MCM President & CEO, Susan Garrard saw the evident desire from the community for this event, noting, “STEM jobs are the future of Mississippi. The Mississippi Science Fest is a great way to expose children to educational concepts in an exciting and engaging way, as well as provide them examples of STEM-centered career paths they may have not had the opportunity to ever consider.”

A study from the **Alliance for Science and Technology Research in America** (ASTRA) predicts an 11% increase in STEM job opportunities in Mississippi between 2015 and 2024. MSF and its partners believe it is vital for children and families to experience STEM education on a level that challenges and encourages them to explore further. The nationally regarded **Science Festival Alliance’s** evaluation data illustrates the importance of festival attendees interacting with STEM professionals. This interaction dramatically increases interest and knowledge in science among attendees. MSF will also work to create opportunities for STEM professionals to gain exposure and become more deeply involved with their community.

About the LeFleur Museum District

The LeFleur Museum District(LMD) promotes four uniquely different museums and is located at a one-quarter mile stretch, just off I-55 and Lakeland Drive in Jackson, MS. The district provides interactive, exciting museum and outdoor experiences with special joint events and activities that educate and entertain families with emphasis in nature, literacy, health and nutrition, the arts and much more. The LMD’s mission is to inspire visitors from around the region and nation with a sense of wonder. LMD creates opportunities for growth for all museums involved through joint events and cross-promotion of individual activities. Associations like the LeFleur Museum District are important developments to this region’s creative economy. The district partners with nearby restaurants and hotels to build the area as a premier destination for visitors.

About C Spire and the C Spire Foundation

C Spire is a diversified telecommunications and technology services company that provides world-class customer-inspired service and a superior comprehensive suite of wireless communications, high-speed Internet access and a range of other telecommunications products and services to consumers and businesses. The C Spire Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and its mission is to support STEM education that strengthens digital literacy, technology and professional skills development for students in grades K-12 and at institutions of higher learning in Mississippi.

For more information about C Spire or the C Spire Foundation, visit www.cspire.com or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cspire or Twitter at www.twitter.com/cspire.



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