

NEWS RELEASE  
2/4/2021



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## STEM Santa Fe Celebrates Its 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with “Eat, Play, Learn”

The COVID-19 pandemic has been very unsettling for us all. But one negatively impacted group in particular has been K-12 students as their learning and social development has been seriously disrupted. In response to the pandemic, STEM Santa Fe stepped up its activities and continued to provide engaging innovative, hands-on programs virtually to enhance students’ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education.

STEM Santa Fe provided project-based STEM day camps virtually for 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students throughout Summer 2020 on 3D design, Engineering, App Development, Math Puzzles, and Bioinformatics. In November, we held a 3-day STEM Pathways for Girls conference for about 100 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade girls, offering twelve virtual workshops, with live instructors and materials delivered to each participant. In addition, three live evening presentations were held on Youtube.

STEM Santa Fe was founded in 2016, serving over 300 students that school year. By mid 2020, the number of programs and students served more than doubled, to 770 students in 2019-2020, with engaging culturally relevant, all-rounded STEM programs. We are a mentorship organization with three pillars:

- Utilizing a network of volunteer **STEM professionals** to serve as mentors and role models;
- Organizing **project-based and hands-on** STEM programs, providing extended learning experiences to middle- and high-school age youth;
- Reducing disparities in educational opportunities by offering our programs **at low to no cost to families**.

STEM Santa Fe is working on solving the problem of underrepresentation in STEM professions in our community, through programs that strive to:

- **equip** students with STEM skills and build pathways into STEM internships, certificates and careers;
- **keep girls engaged** in their STEM education while providing a local support system of like-minded friends and STEM female role models;
- **engage** students in all levels of math activities in a social, cooperative and lively atmosphere;
- **motivate** middle and high school-age students to choose high-level STEM courses in school; and
- **strengthen** the culture of competitiveness and resiliency through academic clubs and activities.

This month STEM Santa Fe is celebrating its five-year anniversary with an online event: “Eat, Learn, Play” theme, thanks to our Celebration sponsors: Zia Credit Union and Del Norte LOV Foundation, philanthropic arm of DNCU. We invite you to celebrate with us on **Saturday, February 6, from 2-3 PM**. All activities are free and require no RSVP. You will be treated to amazing recipes and demos on [Youtube Live](#) with Chef Fernando Ruiz, Cheryl Alters Jamison and Chef Andy Barnes. For more information, please visit [www.stemsantafe.org](http://www.stemsantafe.org).

*STEM Santa Fe advocates for, develops, and provides Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programming, mentoring, and resources for all youth, to realize their potential and expand their opportunities in a dynamic world.*