

Community Matters



Welcome to the Wipro Science Education Fellowship (Wipro SEF) Community Matters Newsletter. We are excited to share updates on the remarkable contributions of our fellows to STEM education. Our program has supported science teachers and districts for over a decade, benefiting nearly 750,000 students. Our partnering universities include: UMass Boston, Stanford University, University of Missouri, University of South Florida, Montclair State University, Mercy University, UNT Dallas, and 35 school districts in their surrounding areas.



The Wipro Science Education Fellowship community is built on mutual support, hard work, and a shared commitment to strengthening students' appreciation and learning of STEM disciplines. Every day, Wipro SEF Fellows make a meaningful difference in their communities by developing new projects for their students, leading professional development for their peers, and organizing district-wide events that inspire interest in STEM.

In this issue, we highlight how Wipro SEF Sites continue to engage their participating districts in STEM leadership initiatives by offering a wide range of events—from formal professional development programs, such as the Wipro School Leaders Program in California, to large community gatherings where Fellows, students, and families can explore hands-on STEM activities, including the STEMagination Expo 2026 and the STEAM Festival & Science Fair in New York State. We also feature several exciting classroom projects from Missouri and New York Fellows that showcase the creativity and impact of Wipro SEF educators.

Acknowledgements

We want to thank Wipro, our corporate sponsor, for their continued support of science education efforts as well as the teachers, district science coordinators, school administrators, and university faculty who improve student learning daily.

Community Building Events

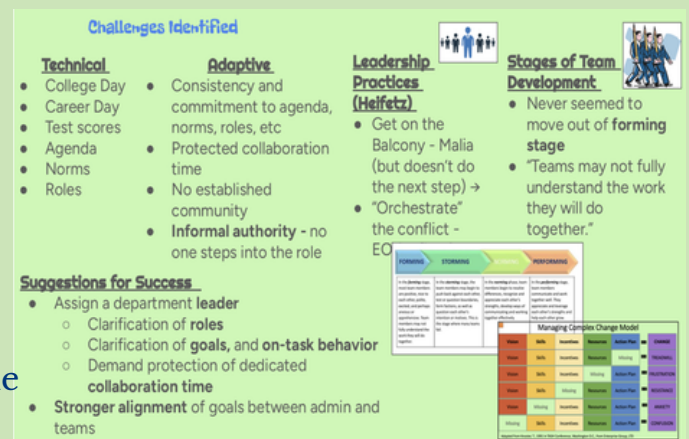
CALIFORNIA: WIPRO SCHOOL LEADERS PROGRAM

This year, the California site continued its successful Wipro School Leaders Program, expanding participation to principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, and teacher leaders (Wipro alumni) who support science professional learning across their districts. The invitation was also extended to other Wipro sites. Designed to strengthen instructional leadership and build cohesive district teams, the program aligns with Wipro SEF goals and is grounded in research showing that developing capacity at every level—teachers, school leaders, and district teams—drives transformational change and supports systemic improvement in science education.

MISSOURI: BUILDING TEACHER LEADERSHIP CAPACITY PRESENTATION AND WIPRO SEF FELLOWS SOCIAL EVENT



Current and alumni Wipro Fellows gathered for a social to see *Silent Sky*, a true-story play about Henrietta Leavitt, an astronomer who mapped stars at Harvard Observatory while fighting for recognition in a male-dominated field. Cohorts 1-6 were represented.

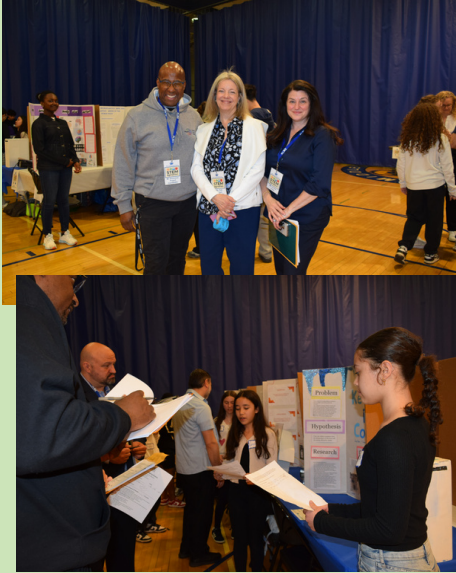


As part of this professional development event, the Missouri Wipro Site invited Melissa Fike, secondary mathematics coordinator for Columbia Public Schools, to speak on *You're the Leader We Need: Developing the Dispositions of Teacher Leadership*. She shared her career journey and emphasized taking risks, committing to student learning, and embracing continuous growth. Melissa encouraged Fellows to step outside their comfort zones, seek mentors, and cultivate strong leadership habits, highlighting them as powerful examples of teacher leaders and challenging them to consider what their next leadership opportunity might look like.

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Community Building Events

NEW YORK: THE STEMAGINATION EXPO 2026 AND STEAM FESTIVAL & SCIENCE FAIR



STEMagination Expo 2026 was organized by Wipro SEF Fellows **Daphne Platt, Walter Grosvenor, Julie Verville, Elizabeth Alvarez, and Ana Wiesner** at Albert Leonard Middle School in the New Rochelle School District. The event was built around an inquiry-based learning project that gave students the opportunity to design, conduct, and present original scientific investigations or engineering solutions. Each student—or team—identified a question or problem aligned with NGSS disciplinary core ideas, applied the scientific method or engineering design process, and presented their findings through written reports, visual displays, and oral presentations.

Isaac E. Young Middle School's IEYMS Ignites Innovation: **STEAMFest** in the New Rochelle School District was organized by Wipro SEF Fellows **Leidy Rodriguez, Jason Corbett, Natika Jones, and Claudia Gianserra**, with support from Administrative Advisor **Julie Verville**. This school-wide, student-centered event was designed to inspire the next generation of thinkers and creators. It featured a community night with engineering design challenges and interactive STEAM exhibits where students shared their work with families. Through hands-on activities, collaborative projects, and real-world problem-solving, students explored authentic challenges, expressed their creativity, and discovered the exciting possibilities within STEAM fields. The event aimed to empower all learners to think critically, work collaboratively, and see themselves as future innovators, problem-solvers, and leaders in an ever-changing world.



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Learning in Action

MISSOURI: CONNECTING MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Teacher leaders: **Bryan Bolton, Kelli Anthes, Peyton Earley, and Katy Crane**
Principal: **Ty Sides**

The Connecting Mathematics and Science project at the Missouri Wipro SEF Site brings together 7th- and 8th-grade math and science teachers at Hallsville Middle School to design cross-content activities that integrate data gathering and analysis. Teams used a modified Alka-Seltzer rocket activity to collect and analyze data aligned with grade-level objectives. Students engaged in experimental design, data collection, graphing, identifying mathematical patterns, applying statistics, and drawing evidence-based conclusions. Teachers and students examined patterns in the data and discussed the realities of “messy” results. This work is laying the foundation for a windmill project the teams will undertake later in the spring.

Action Plan - Science

1. We completed a start up activity with our 7th and 8th grade math and science classes.
2. Students in 7th and 8th grade science collected data on the hangtime of alka-seltzer rockets.
3. Student groups varied between the following water amounts: 5 ml, 10 ml, 15 ml, 20 ml, and 25 ml.
4. Student groups varied between the following alka-seltzer amounts: 1 g, 2 g, 3 g, 4 g, and 5 g.
5. Students were focused on measuring and investigative skills that will be used later on in the windmill project.



HALLSVILLE GRADE 8 ALKA-SELZER ROCKET PLAN

Gallery Walk - 8th grade math



COMPARING DATA ANALYSIS AND TRENDS VIA A GALLERY WALK

NEW YORK: ECO-NARRATIVES: ELEMENTARY STUDENT'S STORYING OUR WORLD THROUGH STEWARDSHIP

Teacher leaders: **Lucia Brea, Alexandra Terry, Vittoria Condello-Vessecchia, Moises Freja**

This project integrates ecological learning, environmental literacy, and student-centered storytelling to deepen students' connection to the natural world. Through eco-narratives—stories that explore the relationship between humans and the environment—elementary students write, draw, record, and investigate their surroundings. Using hands-on experiences, lived and cultural knowledge, and family stories, along with digital tools, students capture and share their environmental learning.

4th grade students learning about pH levels and water quality.



Students able to tend and maintain classroom gardens.

5th grade students writing about their relationship to nature



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Reflections from Wipro SEF Fellows

CALIFORNIA: STANFORD UNIVERSITY

**NICOLE DATA, MARIANO CASTRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, K-5 STEAM
MOUNTAIN VIEW WHISMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRINCIPAL: VERN TAYLOR**



One of the strengths of the Wipro program is how thoughtfully it is structured. The program strikes a meaningful balance between deepening science education practices and developing leadership skills. Unlike many professional development programs I have attended over the years, the Wipro coaches demonstrate a genuine passion for science education and continuous improvement. Their enthusiasm and dedication make the experience both inspiring and practical. I look forward to continuing to use the tools I have learned and staying connected with the colleagues and friends I have made along the way.

MASSACHUSETTS: UMASS BOSTON

**MS. SANDRA DZIEDZIC AND DR. JESSICA PASSEGGIO,
BIOLOGY TEACHERS AT BRAINTREE HIGH SCHOOL, MA
PRINCIPAL: ROBERT KEUTHER**

Jess participated in Cohort 1 for the Wipro SEF program in Braintree which finished in 2015. Sandra participated in Cohort 2 which finished in 2016. Both of their GPS projects focused on bringing technology into the classroom in a student-centered way and implementing the SEPs in curriculum. Jess and Sandra are leaders within the science department and throughout the high school. They have been part of numerous pilots over the years, especially related to technology in the classroom. They have advised various clubs and served as class advisors. Jess and Sandra regularly seek out PD and bring updated pedagogy and resources to the school and district.



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FLORIDA: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

SHERRI ALVAREZ, DESOTO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN TAMPA, FL
PRINCIPAL: EMILY TIRELLI

Ms. Alvarez goals are to improve the 4th and 5th grade students' performance on the science and other state exams by incorporating "enriched and strategically focused science activities and curriculum geared towards more student direct science opportunities as well as increased vocabulary focus and journal writing." She created the DeSoto Dragons STEM Academy to support her team's efforts to improve the students' science language ability and to engage them in hands-on science inquiry. The first is being achieved in concert with the District's efforts using the curriculum K-5 Bridge to Vocabulary. The hands-on activities are happening with the school's outdoor garden and hydroponic gardens inside the school. The food grown by the students will be added to the school's food pantry, which serves the local community. To improve their ability to engage the students in inquiry, the team is doing a book study of Visible Learning for Science.



MISSOURI: UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

AMANDA WOLFE, 8TH GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER AT OAKLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL, COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.
PRINCIPAL: JEFF MIELKE



The 8th grade science curriculum is vast, starting with astronomy before zooming in closer to home and looking at plate tectonics and the history and genetics of the inhabitants. The students get a challenging task of seeing themselves first from very far away, to very up close and personal.

In the first cohort year, her team focused on metacognition and perseverance in problem solving, i.e. looking at themselves and their needs before being able to find their best learning system. Amanda and her students were able to practice this repeatedly, by first developing an initial model, and adapting it and revising it with the knowledge they gained over the course of the units. Often, this has included adding more math skills and application, prompting the productive struggle that is so helpful to the learning process.

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NEW JERSEY: MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

JESSICA CAPPELLO, K-5 MATHEMATICS TEACHER, BLOOMFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS SUPERVISOR PRE-K-5: DANIELLE BENEVENTO



In developing our project, Multi-Path problem solving, we spoke to teachers about how students have a one-track mind thinking model. When they are wrong, they can't deviate from the plan. We talked about how this starts early in math. We started to wonder if since the math problem-solving they are taught is so "do it this way" and "get this answer," was affecting their way of thinking later on, or at least not helping to build an open field. We then began to think if this maybe have effected the way they looked at science and labs- one way to do it and could not try a different path when they were wrong. We observed them in science and saw all of this in action, and then during math. We began implementing multi-solution problems in math to show them they could keep thinking or finding new, more ways. Then we monitored science again. This year, we are implementing math tasks before and comparing lab scores.

NEW YORK: MERCY UNIVERSITY

Our Fellows explained their hopes and dreams for their work as Wipro Reimagined Fellows.

Fellow **Daphne Platt** explained "I decided to apply to Wipro Reimagined to challenge myself and expand my horizons. I hope that our STEMagination project will offer an outlet for students that are, maybe not involved in other things, to express themselves - but all are definitely welcome! I think STEMagination can be an annual event and make our school community proud and STEM positive. I think even the City School District of New Rochelle can benefit as STEMagination, if successful, can only enrich its STEM program and "feed" kids into STEM classes in the High School and beyond."

Another Fellow, **Walter Grosvenor** stated, "I am really excited about this type of endeavor to not only showcase our students but to also build our school/district community. I feel that a project like this will require everyone to make this into a very awe inspiring event; where everyone involved will experience a great feeling of accomplishment and pride in our community."



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TEXAS: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS-DALLAS

ERIKA ROCHA, IRVING ISD
PRINCIPAL: LINDA ROTHEY



Being a WIPRO fellow for the past three years has pushed my teaching and my students in the best possible ways. All three of our projects have been centered not only on STEM, but on helping students grow into empathetic problem-solvers. In year one, students learned about people living with limb differences and designed both a prototype and a 3D-printed assistive limb. Last year and this year, they have taken on the challenge of designing toys and games created specifically for peers their own age who have disabilities. These projects have shown me that STEM isn't just about engineering; it's about understanding people, asking good questions, and designing with compassion. The WIPRO fellowship has expanded my toolkit, strengthened my instruction, and reminded me again and again how capable, thoughtful, and inventive our students can be when they are guided to see the world through someone else's eyes. I have been able to experience the WIPRO community here at UNT Dallas and I could not be more grateful to Dr. Narayan and my fellowship peers.

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