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## **LASM Offering New, Interdisciplinary Programs for 2019-2020 School Year**

The Louisiana Art & Science Museum continuously develops and updates its educational programming to ensure that students from all backgrounds receive a unique, quality educational experience in a museum environment.

The Museum has recently released its 2019-2020 ***Adventure Planner***, a guide for educators seeking to inspire a lifelong love of learning in their students. Program options include hands-on classes, planetarium shows in the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, interactive educational theater, gallery guided tours and explorations, and more.

**New, interdisciplinary planetarium shows and hands-on classes** available this school year include *Apollo 11: First Steps Edition*; *Dinosaurs: Giants of Patagonia*; *Cosmic Colors: An Adventure Along the Spectrum*; *Marbles, Motion, & Magnets*; *The Art of Astronomy*; and *The River Dynamics Experience*. Created through a new partnership with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, ***The River Dynamics Experience***, offered **free-of-charge exclusively for 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students**, includes a visit to the LSU Center for River Studies and same-day, hands-on classes and programs at the Museum that are aligned with the Louisiana Student Standards for Science.

*"The River Dynamics Experience* is one of many exciting opportunities for students who visit LASM because it introduces them to the challenges of land loss and coastal erosion, inspiring them to discover solutions to these real-world issues," said Nita Mitchell, LASM's Director of Education. "Not only will they visit one of the most technologically-advanced river models in the world, but they will also engage with our new stream table and play with the principles of river dynamics."

The *Adventure Planner* outlines descriptions and details of LASM's programs for students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12. The carefully-curated layered experiences developed by the LASM education team are an invaluable feature of the *Adventure Planner*. Each program is designed to address curriculum requirements and help students build connections and achieve deeper learning.

"When students understand the relevance of STEAM in their everyday lives, their perspective changes and they see new possibilities open up to them," said Mitchell. "Many of our programs blend principles of art and science to reinforce what students are learning in the classroom, empowering them to recognize opportunities that will encourage both success in school and in future career paths."

The long term benefits of museum school programs, like those at LASM, have been well-documented. In a 2014 study by *Education Next*, students who attended a field trip to a museum were found to experience an increase in critical thinking skills, historical empathy, and tolerance. For students from rural or high-poverty regions, this increase was even more significant.

“LASM has developed a model school program that currently serves forty-one parishes in Louisiana and five counties in Mississippi,” said Serena Pandos, President & Executive Director of LASM. “The positive feedback we receive from teachers and students affirms that the Museum’s school program fosters new connections and new ways of thinking through its exhibitions, planetarium shows, and hands-on learning experiences.”

“Research shared by the American Alliance of Museums shows that children who grow up with museums have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, and college attendance rates, as well as lower dropout rates,” Pandos continued. “These academic benefits are reaped by students regardless of socio-economic status. This year, we are especially pleased to offer *The River Dynamics Experience* to our repertoire of programs. The purpose of this program, in partnership with CPRA, is to expose 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students to career paths in environmental preservation, engineering, design, and ecology — all relevant paths to sustainability, not only in our region but also worldwide.”

To assist in the expansion of LASM’s school programming, purchase tickets for the Museum’s 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Gala, CHROMA: Color Your Senses, which will be held September 20. Proceeds from the sale of Gala tickets, Grand Raffle tickets, silent auction bids, and sponsorships go toward the Museum’s school programs, which served approximately 98,000 school program participants in 2018. For more information, to purchase tickets, or to become a sponsor, visit [lasm.org/gala](http://lasm.org/gala).

The *Adventure Planner* has been mailed to educators throughout Louisiana and is also available online at [lasm.org/ap](http://lasm.org/ap). Educators needing assistance in customizing a day of learning for their students at LASM should email [reservations@lasm.org](mailto:reservations@lasm.org). For questions related to *The River Dynamic Experience*, email Nita Mitchell at [nmitchell@lasm.org](mailto:nmitchell@lasm.org).

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**Image:** The front cover of the 2019-2020 *Adventure Planner* depicting students gathering evidence from a simulated crime scene as part of *Forensic Crime Lab*, one of the many classes offered at LASM.

### **About the Louisiana Art & Science Museum**

A nonprofit organization housed on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum enhances the understanding and appreciation of art and science for general audiences and students by presenting unique, educational and entertaining experiences that encourage discovery, inspire creativity, and foster the pursuit of knowledge. More information about the Art & Science Museum is available at [lasm.org](http://lasm.org).

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