

Featured Speakers

09:30 AM



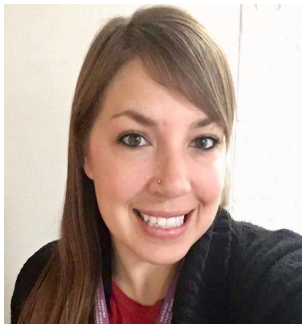
Mireya Becker

Director of School Learning Experiences at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago

Presentation: "The Natural World Through Inquiry"

Mireya Becker is the Director of School Learning Experiences at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. She has a Bachelor of Arts in History and a Master of Education from the University of Illinois, Chicago. She and her team are excited to talk about how inquiry-based STEM and sensemaking is a collaborative process that positions students as acting and thinking like scientists and engineers.

09:30 AM



Rebecca Garelli

Arizona Sci. Teachers Assoc./Class CrunchLabs, Prof. Learning Spec./NGSS Curr. Writer

Presentation: "Effective Discourse Strategies for Boosting Student Engagement"

Rebecca Garelli specializes in middle school math and science and the development of NGSS-aligned curriculum and assessments. She currently serves as the Professional Learning Specialist for the Arizona Science Teachers Association (ASTA), designing science professional learning for over 57 districts statewide and facilitating NGSS training nationwide. Previously, she was the Science & STEM Specialist for the Arizona Department of Education, an NGSS Instructional Coach in Chicago, and adjunct faculty at DePaul University. Rebecca holds a B.S. in Elementary Education from DePaul and an M.Ed. in Science Education from Loyola University Chicago.

10:30 AM



Dr. Jessica Chavez

Griffin Museum of Science + Industry, VP of Education & CLO

Presentation: "Inspiring the Inventive Genius: Griffin MSI's Approach to Learning in Action"

Jessica Chavez is the Ruth D. and Ken M. Davee Vice President of Education and Chief Learning and Community Partnership Officer at Griffin MSI. She will join us to talk about how MSI's student experiences spark curiosity through play, participatory action, and pathways that extend beyond the classroom, empowering students to turn exploration into readiness for higher education and meaningful careers.

12:30 AM**Michelle Nichols***Adler Planetarium, Director of Public Observing***Presentation:** “Stars Aligned: Tracing the Story of Astronomy & Astrology”

Michelle Nichols is the Director of Public Observing at Chicago’s Adler Planetarium, where she has worked for over 30 years. She holds a B.S. in Physics and Astronomy from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from National Louis University. Michelle leads the Adler’s telescope, observatory, and public skywatching programs and events. A dynamic science communicator since 1999, she has delivered hundreds of talks across the Midwest and beyond. Michelle has also advised on numerous children’s astronomy books and is the author of *Astronomy Lab for Kids* (2016).

01:30 PM**Brian Hicks****Presentation:** “Comedy Show”

Brian is one of the country's most sought-after stand-up comics, (no, he is not wanted by the police). However, he has taken the comedy world by storm with his insightful views on what people find funny. The laughs come fast and frequently as he has spent the last 25 years honing his craft at clubs and theaters across the United States Brian specializes in giving every audience a hilarious and singular comedic experience. His unique talent consists of clever material and unparalleled audience interaction, which he combines seamlessly with his lightning quick wit. Brian has incredible instincts and an undeniable ability to make audiences laugh. Sounds great, right? Of course it does, Brian wrote it!

02:30 PM**Daniel Morales-Doyle***University of Illinois Chicago, Associate Professor***Presentation:** “Transformative Science Teaching in Troubled Times”

Daniel Morales-Doyle is an Associate Professor of Science Education at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He has written several articles and books, such as “Transformative Science Teaching: A Catalyst for Justice and Sustainability” and his current research examines the potential for science education to act as a catalyst for alternative futures.