

The Power of STEM Education

Can you remember the moment that sparked your interest in math or science?

The National Science Foundation posted this question on Twitter to draw peoples' attention to the power of STEM education.

And it made us wonder — what was this moment for our passionate math and science professionals who work each day to help create STEM sparks for others?

Find out below.



"In 1963 I was in a 6th grade classroom that piloted a new pond water curriculum. I still remember how astonished I was when I looked through a microscope and saw living things. I also remember when my brother, my father, and I hunted for fossils among the rocks on a dam. This kind of experience led me to civil engineering and the study of soil and dams."

—Sara Lacy, Senior Scientist

"I went to a summer science sampler program at UNM and was inspired to make my own "bug box." My mom kept opening plastic containers in the freezer only to find my specimens awaiting pinning."

—Kelly Paulson, Work Unit Manager of the Center for STEM Teaching and Learning (CSTL) at TERC

"I remember studying plants on hikes with my family, making fish prints at the local science center, and programming with our elementary school computer teacher. Both in-school and out-of-school experiences have been critical!"

—Scott Pattison, Research Scientist



"I very specifically remember watching an episode of Bill Nye the Science Guy about volcanoes. I was already kind of interested in science before then, but that really cemented it and focused my interest for a while!"

—Benjamin Gosbee, Staff Accountant

"I knew I was interested in science before junior high, but still, the experience that sticks out in my head is going to a geology or rock show with my seventh-grade science teacher. It wasn't a school trip, just a teacher sharing her passion for science with any of her students who wanted to go to this weekend event."

—Teon Edwards, Chair of the Center for STEM Teaching and Learning (CSTL) at TERC

"I have always loved the outdoors and animals, and I wanted to be a vet for a long time. My parents didn't let me have a pet as a child, so I kept snails I found in the lettuce in a shoe box and observed them, fed them, and played with them for months."

—Nuria Jaumot-Pascual, Research Scientist