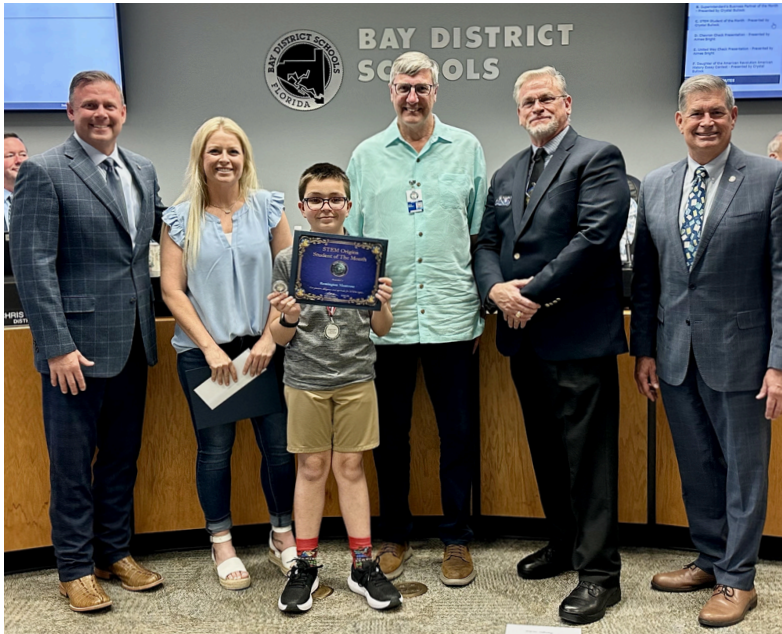


ORIGINS

STEM Origins Foundation

April 2026



Remington Montrose: Student of the Month

Every month of the school year, we select a STEM student in recognition of those who most reflect our core values of Passion, Diligence & Aptitude for STEM, while also demonstrating Collaboration with others.

On March 24, 2026, the STEM Origins Foundation proudly recognized **Remington Montrose**, a sixth grader at **Deane Bozeman School**, as our STEM Student of the Month. Remington received a medal, a certificate suitable for framing, and a gift certificate to Texas Roadhouse.

In recognition of the important role educators play in student success, his

teacher, **Heather Brinkmeier**, was also honored with a gift certificate and a copy of Remington’s award for her classroom. According to Ms. Brinkmeier, Remington demonstrates the core values of STEM Origins Foundation in the following ways:

Passion
Remington approaches STEM with genuine excitement and intellectual curiosity. He asks thoughtful questions that go beyond the lesson, striving to understand not just how things work, but *why*. His enthusiasm drives him to explore advanced concepts, conduct his own research, and share his discoveries.

Diligence
Remington demonstrates

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exceptional perseverance when faced with challenges. He works methodically through complex problems, revising his approach and learning from mistakes. His patience, focus, and commitment to excellence reflect a maturity and work ethic that distinguish him from his peers.

See *Remington Montrose*, pg. 2

Remington Montrose (Continued)

Aptitude

With strong analytical skills, Remington excels at breaking down complex problems and applying logical reasoning. He recognizes patterns, connects ideas across disciplines, and consistently demonstrates higher-level thinking that exceeds grade-level expectations.

Collaboration

A natural leader and supportive teammate, Remington communicates clearly, values diverse perspectives, and encourages participation from others. His positive attitude and willingness to help make him a respected and appreciated member of any group.

----- We applaud you, Remington! -----



Meet a STEM Origins Volunteer: Lisa Lee, Actuary

Lisa Lee's lifelong journey with mathematics has come full circle, as she now spends her time inspiring the next generation of problem-solvers at STEM Origins school events. From her early days as a logic-puzzle enthusiast to a successful career as a pension actuary in the Washington D.C. area, Lisa has always found a sense of home in the world of data.

Today, she is a familiar, energetic face at our local school events (see page 7), where she can be found mentoring students through interesting challenges. Whether she's helping a student navigate a difficult logic puzzle or explaining the real-world applications of data analysis, Lisa's enthusiasm is infectious. She often remarks that she is having just as much fun as the kids!

Reflecting on where it began, Lisa shared, "As a young kid, I was always drawn to numbers and logic puzzles. Once, in Girl Scout camp, I memorized a 25+ digit number and recited it to my parents later that night at dinner. I always enjoyed and excelled in math classes and studied actuarial science in college."

That childhood fascination paved the way for a rigorous professional life. Lisa spent years tackling the complexities of the financial world, ensuring the stability of retirement futures through meticulous calculation.

She says, "I made my career in the Washington D.C. area as a pension actuary where I analyzed data, calculated benefits, and determined the value of individual benefits and plan liability. I enjoy sharing my knowledge and love for math, logic, and analyzing data."

For Lisa, volunteering isn't just about teaching formulas; it's about showing students that math is a vibrant, living language. Her ability to translate her high-level professional experience into fun, engaging mentorship makes her an invaluable part of the STEM Origins team.

Beyond her work with students, Lisa is also bringing her professional precision to our leadership team, where she will serve as our newly appointed Treasurer. We are incredibly lucky to have her helping our students—and our organization—see the magic in the numbers.

Origin Story: Ralph Baer, Video Game Inventor

Engineer **Ralph Baer** helped launch the modern video game industry by creating the first commercially successful home console, the Magnavox Odyssey. His work laid the foundation for an industry that generated over \$8 billion in revenue by 2004, with projections reaching \$15 billion by 2010.

In the 1960s, while working at Sanders Associates, Baer explored the idea of interactive television gaming. Despite the company's primary focus on military systems, leadership recognized the commercial potential of his concept. Baer developed a prototype known as the "Brown Box," featuring multiple games such as ping-pong, soccer, and checkers. This innovation was later licensed, leading to the 1972 release of the Odyssey.

Baer continued advancing interactive entertainment, notably creating Simon in 1978, an enduring electronic game that introduced memory-based gameplay using microprocessor technology.

Born in Germany, Baer immigrated to the United States as a teenager. After serving in U.S. Army Military Intelligence during World War II, he earned a degree in television engineering and built a long career in electronics. In recognition of his contributions, he received the National Medal of Technology in 2004, cementing his legacy as a pioneer of interactive digital entertainment.

U.S. Patent No.
3,728,480

Inducted in 2010

Born March 8, 1922

Died Dec. 6, 2014



Attribution: [National Inventors Hall of Fame](#)



Upcoming STEM Events

- 12 April: STEM Zone at the Gulf Coast Salute Airshow
- 26 April: Top Golf Fundraiser to benefit Rising Star Scholarship Program (see pg. 4)
- 28 April: STEM Student of Month Recognition at BDS School Board Meeting
- 08 May: MLK Jr. Recreation Center: Egg Drop Challenge
- 09 May: Mowat School Science Boot Camp
- 10 July: MLK Jr. Recreation Center: Baking Soda Volcano
- 01 August: MLK Jr. Recreation Center: Solar Oven S'Mores

Why STEM Matters More than Ever in the US

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education is no longer a niche academic pathway, but rather a national priority. As technology reshapes nearly every industry, preparing students with STEM skills is essential for economic growth, innovation, and global competitiveness. From artificial intelligence and cybersecurity to renewable energy and advanced manufacturing, the demand for STEM talent is accelerating faster than the supply of trained workers.

For students, strong STEM education opens doors to high-impact careers. For communities, it builds a workforce capable of solving complex challenges. And for the nation, it strengthens innovation and economic resilience in a rapidly changing world.

Expanding Opportunities through STEM

Access to high-quality STEM education also plays a critical role in expanding opportunity and prosperity. When students from diverse

backgrounds are exposed to STEM learning early, they gain pathways to high-demand careers that can transform families and communities.

Programs that support robotics teams, coding clubs, science competitions, and mentorship opportunities help ensure that all students can see themselves as future engineers, scientists, and innovators.



Fun(d)raising

STEM Origins - Top Golf Spring Fundraiser
26 Apr 2026

- **12pm-3pm:** 26 April 2026
- **3hr** Experience, w/ Food Buffet, Soft Drinks & Tips incl.

2 Price Tiers:

- ~~Now~~ **13 Mar:** Early Bird rate = \$65/ea
- **14 Mar - 17 April:** Reg Rate = **\$78** (same as our last time)

Tickets: use QR Code (left) or go to:
www.stemorigins.org or
<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/spring-topgolf-event--2025>

- **Great Value, Great Fun**
- Reg retail price for Sunday afternoon is \$52/hr = **\$156/3hrs**

• Also Seeking Corporate Sponsors

Proceeds benefit our Rising Star Scholarship Program. Link to purchase tickets: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/spring-topgolf-event--2025>

Note that “tips” on Zeffy do not benefit our organization or the scholarships. You may still complete your purchase with a \$0 tip!

Visionaries of Tomorrow: The 2026 Invention Convention

The Bay District Schools Invention Convention and Entrepreneurship Fair Awards Ceremony, held on March 25, 2026, was a vibrant celebration of innovation, creativity, and student achievement.

This inspiring event was coordinated by Bay County Schools K-12 Science Specialist **Jill Hansen** and made possible through the generous sponsorship of **Gulf Coast State College, Bay Education Foundation, and Lowe's**.

Several STEM Origins directors and members served as coaches, supporters, and judges. Heartfelt appreciation is extended to **Mark Bradshaw, Steve Pavelitz, Greg Mertz, Mike McManus, Scott Deon, Pamela McCarthy, and Renee Wise** for their contributions to the success of the event and awards ceremony.

Distinguished guests in attendance added to the significance of the occasion, including BDS Superintendent **Mark McQueen**, Deputy Superintendent **Denise Kelley**, and Director of Secondary Instruction **Alana Simmons**. Their presence underscored the importance of fostering innovation and excellence in education.

The highlights of the awards ceremony were the keynote address of Superintendent **McQueen** and the **Special Achievement Award** address delivered by **Mark Bradshaw, President of the STEM Origins Foundation**.

In his remarks to the students, he celebrated their ingenuity and perseverance, and presented 10 special awards to 21 outstanding students. These honors were based on the STEM Origins core values of Passion, Diligence, Aptitude, and Collaboration, and recognized ten exceptional inventions:

- **Click'n Cook**, invented by **Malak Almobark, Maryam Jabrane, and Sham Okashah**, allows a user to upload a picture of their ingredients and receive a list of healthy recipe options.
- **Multi-purpose Trailer**, created by **Kyle Jensen and Griffin Poynor**, features an easy-to-load, multi-use rack system that enables users to switch between different types of hauling without changing parts.
- **The Magic TP Roll**, developed by **Beaux Moore**, is a biodegradable toilet paper roll core that can be flushed to help clean the toilet with a time-released cleaning agent.

Continued on pg. 6



Invention Convention, Continued

- **Cook-Inator**, designed by Jorge Nicholas Fajardo, Jr., enables the use of interchangeable cooking utensils that attach to an amputee's prosthetic limb.

- **Travel Tray**, invented by Kaitlyn Barrio and Sara Rodriguez, is a flexible silicone mat that attaches to an airplane tray table to keep small personal items organized and secure during flight.

- **Frosty Fisher**, created by Sawyer Bryan and Brae Rowan, maintains a cool environment to preserve soft plastic fishing lures that are often damaged by heat and sunlight when stored in vehicles and boats.

- **Sprouter**, developed by Mason Powers, Ruby Rose, and Adam Simperts, is a smart device that clips onto a plant's pot to automatically measure soil pH, moisture, and sunlight.

The data is sent to a phone app, allowing users to manage an automated watering system.

- **Propelling Health**, invented by Tyler Howell, Kennedy McAuliffe, and Finn Lewis, is a temperature-controlled delivery parcel carried by a drone to provide insulin during emergencies when electricity or road access is unavailable.

- **GuideStep**, created by Karma Masoud, is a navigation instrument designed to help individuals who are blind move safely, confidently, and independently without using a cane. Built into everyday shoes, it provides voice instructions similar to other navigation devices.

Congratulations to the award recipients and all of the young inventors who participated!



Karma Masoud displays her prototype for her invention, "Guide Step," a device that helps people with blindness navigate the world.

A. Gary Walsingham Academy STEAM Night

“The adults are having as much fun as the kids!” said Lisa Lee, a STEM Origins volunteer mentor, on March 10th at Walsingham Academy’s STEAM Night. STEM Origins volunteers **Brian Maxwell** and **Dan Rush** were also close by, guiding students’ thinking and curiosity with electrical circuits and magnetic challenges. Our interactive stations were a HUGE HIT, and included magnetic chess, a digital microscope, gravity mazes, building kits, circuitry, human anatomy puzzles, & more.

In the STEAM lab, a student named Jett was having fun with robotic coding as he moved a car through an obstacle course, using an interactive kit provided to them with support from STEM Origins. It was great to see this in action firsthand. Jett said, “I feel like I’m actually driving a car,” cheering when he made it through the obstacles successfully.

The event was coordinated by Walsingham’s STEAM teacher **Julie Defelice**, who recruited many exciting stations from the community for kids to visit with their families at the school. Thank you to **Walsingham Academy** for inviting us, and thank you to our fabulous volunteers for making it great for the students!



Hutchison Beach Elementary Leadership Day

STEM Origins Volunteers enjoyed a fun morning at **Hutchison Beach Elementary’s Leadership Day** on March 13th. Community leaders were wowed by the student leadership evident here! Students greeted us with handshakes as we entered the building, spoke eloquently in front of a whole-school audience, and led us on an enthusiastic tour of their school, where students in classrooms described their learning and showcased various projects. Our favorite stop was the STEM lab, of course! Students showed off their STEM cart (purchased by STEM Origins with a grant from **The St. Joe Community Foundation, Inc.**) and their hydroponics lab (purchased by STEM Origins with a donation from **The Law Office of Lucy Collins**).

Olivia Breeze, Beach Elementary’s STEM teacher, had this to say about their school’s Leadership Day: “The students truly enjoyed the opportunity to share what they have been working on, and it was wonderful to see their excitement as they presented their projects. Being able to present to people they don’t know is such an important experience for students as they grow. Opportunities like this allow them to apply STEM concepts in real-world ways while building confidence in their communication and presentation skills. Today’s event clearly helped many of them take that step forward.”



Support HOPE in Bay County: Helping Our Parents Engage

Bay District Schools is calling on all community partners, business leaders, and local heroes to help put the “A” Back in Bay!

Announcing the **HOPE Café: Grade Transition & Summer Success Expo**—a districtwide initiative dedicated to bridging the summer learning gap and strengthening the path to graduation. Bay County Schools invites you to help support families from across the district, as advertised on the St. Andrew School and Oscar Patterson Academy Facebook pages.

Event Details:

- When: Saturday, April 18, 2026 | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- Where: New Horizons Learning Center | 3200 Minnesota Ave., Lynn Haven
- Focus: Transitioning to Kindergarten, Middle School, and High School, plus High School Pathways and Post-Secondary options.

How You Can Partner with HOPE:

- Hosting an informational table or interactive resource station
- Engaging directly with families to share career and educational opportunities
- Donating materials, supplies, refreshments, or participation incentives

Contact **Loretta Mistrot** at 850-767-4354 or call the event information line at 850-767-4294.



About Us

Our mission is to support local education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) with projects that inspire students and teachers at every level of the academic ladder from kindergarten through college.

We seek to increase the quantity, quality, and diversity of high school and college STEM graduates. Our approach involves engaging students early (K-5) to foster interest in STEM subjects and maintaining engagement throughout middle school, high school, and college with progressively advanced activities.

Programs include providing hands-on experiences, classroom equipment, and

access to STEM professionals through visits, virtual presentations, and coaching on innovation and long-term goals. We plan to offer scholarships for college STEM fields and STEM camps for all grade levels overtime. Additionally, we support STEM teachers through grants for career development, professional growth, and innovative classroom experiments to enhance student learning experiences.

The STEM Origins Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Bay County, Florida. IRS Certification, Articles of Incorporation, and By-Laws are available on our [website](#). Also visit us on [Facebook](#).

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