



Happy New Year! Thank you for taking a look at CENI's first newsletter. Our goal is to help us all stay up to date on the wide-ranging outreach and engagement activities between Virginia Tech and the community. We hope this newsletter will serve as a quick and useful check-in each month and open up paths for working together more.

Each month we'll feature highlights from Virginia Tech's efforts toward fulfilling its land grant mission, provide a Save the Dates list of upcoming events, check in with our museum and preK-12 liaisons, and share work from our Center and partners. We'll try to add newsworthy items and nuggets of wisdom, too.

Please share widely, let us know if you have announcements for next month, and keep in touch!

Lisa McNair
Director, CENI
Professor, Engineering Education



CENI is bringing outreach online

Normally, the Virginia Tech Science Festival would be old news by now, but this year we're working on our staying power. Videos from the learning meet-ups between VT researchers and groups of amazing locals are still available on the ICAT website, and we're busy editing and 'wrapping' them to be more widely accessible. Stay tuned for new videos from Radford High School's Bobcat Career Talks, the Science Festival, and more.

We've also created a Virginia Tech account on #GoOpenVA – a free online platform that teachers use to share and curate openly-licensed digital resources. Virginia Tech offerings will be vetted and clearly labeled using a rubric protocol.

CENI is seeking preK-12 Content to share with Virginia's teachers during the pandemic. Please contact Phyllis Newbill (PNewbill@vt.edu) if you and/or your students are creating content this semester that you would like to share.

Highlights

- 1 STEM Commission Bill passes House 100-0
- 2 *Girls Launch!* Communicating Science
- 3 CENI Community & Liaison Check-ins

Save the Dates

CENTER FOR COMMUNICATING SCIENCE

Embodying Emotional Connections to Science through Theatre – Daniel Bird Tobin
Jan 28 • 5:30 – 6:30 pm

INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVITY, ARTS, AND TECHNOLOGY

Creativity + Innovation Day
Feb 4 • Call for Proposals Opens
ICAT SEAD Proposals [deadline](#)
Feb 12 • 5:00pm

MOSS ARTS CENTER

An evening with Tara Westover
Interviewed by Amy Azano, associate professor in the Virginia Tech School of Education
Feb 6 • 7:30pm

"The Girl Who Forgot to Sing Badly"
Free School-Day Stream: Theatre Lovett
Feb 12 • 10:00 – 11:00 am
Ticketed Stream and Q&A with Louis Lovett
Mar 6 • 4:00pm

VIRGINIA TECH GIVING DAY 2021

Feb 24 • Noon - Midnight



INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVITY,
ARTS, AND TECHNOLOGY
VIRGINIA TECH.

icat.vt.edu
ceni.icat.vt.edu
ceni@vt.edu



1 Virginia House of Delegates votes UNANIMOUSLY to establish Statewide STEM Advisory Board

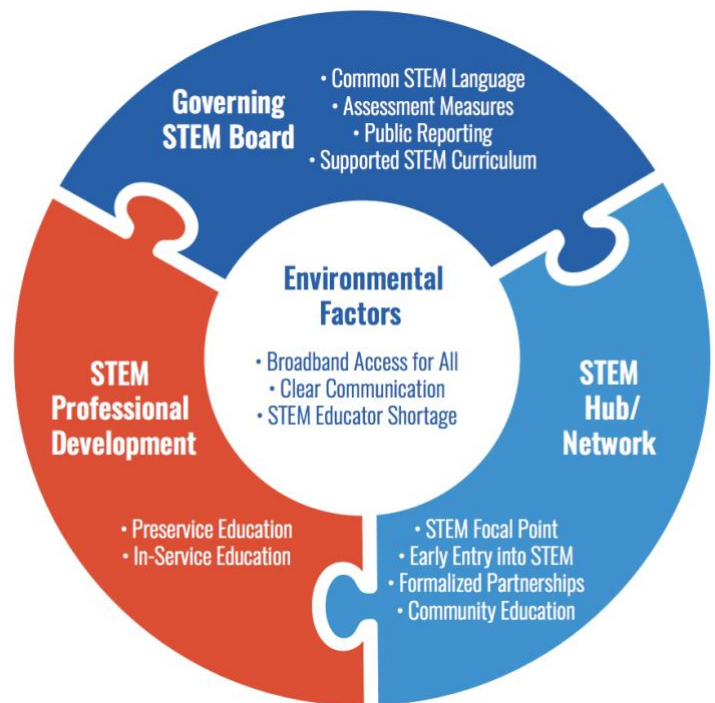
Delegate Simonds carried [HB 2058](#), which formally codifies the Virginia STEM Education Advisory Board and ensures a coordinated effort across the Commonwealth to provide high quality STEM education to all learners. This bill is the number one recommendation of the [STEM Education Commission](#). The Commission included our own **Sue Magliaro** who as Virginia Tech professor emerita continues to tirelessly guide our leaders in the work for equitable STEM education in the Commonwealth. She gave these comments at the hearing last week:

The Advisory Board will create a foundation that includes a common lexicon, a rubric for expectations, a plan for broadband access, a statewide communication system – as well as identify the key leaders across the stakeholder sectors: preK-12, higher education (2- and 4-year), business, industry, military, community organizations, governmental agencies.

The promise of a coordinated, statewide approach to advancing STEM Education for all needs to be in place for Virginia to meet needs for economic growth, and especially to revive our economy during this unprecedented pandemic – which has laid bare the educational disparities, lack of infrastructure, and information gaps.

Next, the bill goes to the Senate and if it passes, **Chuck English**, Virginia STEM Coordinator, will be appointed as a staff member to the Governor’s STEM Advisory Board. Chuck worked with the representatives from the 4-VA universities who convened at the [Virginia STEM Summit](#) led by **Dr. Phyllis Newbill** and **Dr. Magliaro** in 2019 and produced [a white paper](#) that informed many of the Commission’s recommendations.

Thanks to all, including Governor Northam and Secretary of Education Qarni, who are championing legislation to *STEM for all* a reality.





2

ICAT RAPID SEAD Grants help in navigating outreach during the COVID-19 Pandemic — Part 1 of a 3-part Series

This series features three groups who rapidly created outreach activities this past summer for engaging preK-12 students during times when face-to-face interaction is not possible. We begin with Carrie Kroehler and her team at the Center for Communicating Science.

Girls Launch! Science Videos for Kids—and Female Role Models!

Do you have kids at home? Planning outreach activities and need resources? Concerned about the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields?

Ten short science videos appropriate for elementary school aged children are available for use by families and educators.

The videos, products of a summer project by the [Center for Communicating Science](#), were created by ten women graduate students. Topics include germs, lakes, birds, horses, paleontology, mindfulness, observation, rainbows, the immune system, and the five senses. Activity guides are linked to the videos.

The video project, supported by a grant from the [Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology](#), was a response to the coronavirus pandemic. [Girls Launch!](#), a school visits program that provides female scientist role models to kindergarten children, had been interrupted by the pandemic. The creation of the videos allows for virtual visits to the classrooms.

The ten videos, with their accompanying activity guides, are available on the [Science Videos for Kids playlist](#) at the [Center for Communicating Science YouTube channel](#).

For more information about the project, see “[Ten Kindergarten Videos Supported by ICAT Grant](#)” in the Center for Communicating Science newsletter.

- 1 **Infections, Germs and Immune cells!**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
8:56
- 2 **Let's Learn About Lakes**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
8:53
- 3 **Let's Talk About Birds**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
6:05
- 4 **Let's Learn About Horses**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
8:31
- 5 **Meet a Paleontologist**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
5:02
- 6 **Mia and Mindfulness**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
5:11
- 7 **Head outside with a Scientist!**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
4:52
- 8 **Rainbows!**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
4:55
- 9 **The Immune System**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
3:58
- 10 **The 5 Senses, the Brain, and Bugs**
Center for Communicating Science at Virginia Tech
5:18



3

CENI Community and Liaison Check-ins

Partner Updates

The *modus operandi* of Fall 2020 continues into Spring: everyone is adapting by both creating online outreach and waiting to find out when in-person options will become available.

VT Engage is offering its [Lead for Good](#) program for undergraduates online – students need to apply by this Friday, Jan 29 at 11:59pm.

CEED is prepared to offer its [pre-college and undergraduate programs](#) online but waiting for decisions on in-person options for summer outreach.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Virginia State University and Virginia Tech, jointly) continues to build on \$50K grant to send [Mars Base Camp kits](#) to educators, kids, and parents.

To purchase the kit:

<https://shop4-h.org/products/mars-base-camp-stem-challenge>

Online resources and webinar recordings:

<https://4-h.org/parents/4-h-stem-challenge/>

CALS Extension welcomed Timothy Miles, who joined in October 2020 as Virginia Tech's first [Youth Protection Specialist](#).



We want to [promote connections](#). Please send your 'save the date' information, education and outreach opportunities, and announcements by Noon on Friday of the third full week each month and we'll do our best to include it in the newsletter.

Liaison Corner

Floyd County Public Schools is collaborating with University Libraries and CENI to [equip schools and teachers for virtual learning](#).

Radford City Public Schools is collaborating with VT-DITC and CENI to build a Hip Hop Studio at Radford High School.

The Science Museum of Western Virginia is collaborating with Virginia Tech to host [LAB Chats at schools](#) this academic year. Museum educators host online, real-time conversations between Virginia Tech researchers and schoolchildren. Children are learning that scientists are approachable and local.

Montgomery County Public Schools has been recognized by the [Virginia Board of Education as a School Division of Innovation](#) for designing and implementing alternatives to traditional instructional practices and school structures that improve student learning and promote college and career readiness, and good citizenship.

