



AGENDA

MARCH 3, 2026

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Spring into Summer Welcome and Reimagining Our Humanity Through Art, Science, and Technology Keynote
*Speaker: **Agnes Chavez**, Founder/Director of STEMarts Lab*

9:30 a.m. – 9:40 a.m. Break and Visit Exhibitors

9:40 a.m. – 10:40 a.m. Four Concurrent Breakout Sessions

The Human Thread – Cultivating Empathy Through Shared Experience

This interactive workshop invites youth-serving professionals to reconnect with the universal experiences of adolescence and discover meaningful parallels between their own youth and the young people they serve today. Through a guided “Common Ground” activity, participants will reflect on formative experiences, build empathy, and explore practical strategies for fostering authentic, trust-based relationships with youth.

*Speaker: **Madonna Hernandez**, Girls Inc. of Santa Fe*

Entrepreneurial STEAM Challenges: Elevate Student Voice Through Innovation

Experience entrepreneurship in action through ESTEAM Challenges that center creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. Participants will work through a design-thinking process—empathy, ideation, prototyping, and pitching—while tackling a real-world challenge. Attendees will leave with ready-to-use ESTEAM activities and strategies to cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets in K–12 OST settings.

*Speaker: **Scott Mann**, VentureLab*



Getting to the Money: Grant Writing Made Easy – Part 1

Identifying and securing funding can be one of the most challenging tasks for out-of-school time (OST) programs. Many program providers have varied backgrounds and experience levels, which could either help or hinder their ability to effectively identify and craft high-quality grant narratives. This workshop introduces participants to the foundational elements of successful grant writing. OST providers will learn how to identify fundable program ideas, understand common components of foundational grant applications, and align their program goals with funder priorities. Participants will also explore best practices for preparing to pursue grant opportunities. This session is ideal for OST professionals seeking to build or strengthen their grant writing knowledge and confidence.

*Speaker: **Sheneika Simmons**, Simmons Leadership Services*

STEAM Activities for Your OST Program

Explore a variety of hands-on, interactive activities that you can implement immediately in your classroom. Participants will investigate paper helicopters, learn about soil density columns, and more using low-cost, easy-to-source materials. This workshop blends STEM learning with real-world application, offering ready-to-use activities that can be immediately implemented in OST programs.

*Speaker: **Lauren Butcher**, Explora*

10:40 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. Break and Visit Exhibitors

10:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. Four Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Explore New Mexico's STEM Innovation Network

This interactive session introduces participants to the NM STEM Innovation Network and its regional hub model. Attendees will learn how hubs coordinate partnerships, share resources, and support statewide STEM priorities, including computer science, career pathways, and rural access. Facilitated networking will help participants identify collaborators and resources aligned with their community needs.

*Speakers: **Patricia Carden** and **Wanda Bulger-Tamez**, New Mexico State University STEM Outreach Center*

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*Speaker: **Scott Mann**, VentureLab*

Making it Happen: Successful Partnerships between CBOs and LEAs

This session offers a behind-the-scenes look at a successful 21st Century Community Learning Centers partnership between Farmington Municipal Schools and the Boys & Girls Club of San Juan County. Participants will explore program design, daily operations, evaluation, and sustainability, gaining practical insights into building and maintaining strong, high-impact OST partnerships.

*Speakers: **Rae Yazzie** and **Sharon Bassing**, Farmington Municipal Schools*

All Children Flourishing: Introduction to the Nurtured Heart Approach

Learn how to be a powerful agent of change in your afterschool and summer program with a few minutes of positive interventions every day. The Nurtured Heart Approach is a philosophy and set of dynamic strategies with no blame, no guilt and no negativity. The principles are focused on maximizing every child's potential and greatness. The approach is simple to implement and can have an immediate and lifelong effect on children's relationships with parents, teachers, and peers. In this session you will learn how to help children feel great about who they are and how to create thriving environments allowing children to flourish no matter the current behavior, condition or circumstance.

*Speaker: **May Sagbakken**, New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network*



11:50 a.m. – 12:50 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Four Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Youth Entrepreneurship in OST: Panel Discussion and Lessons Learned

Discover how Youth Entrepreneurship (YE) is transforming out-of-school time programs across New Mexico and learn how to launch your own initiative. Our panel of local leaders will share practical strategies for helping youth of all ages turn creative ideas into prototypes and businesses. Join us to explore how these programs foster an entrepreneurial mindset through resilience, problem-solving, and hands-on innovation.

*Facilitator: **Scott Mann**, VentureLab*

Getting to the Money: Grant Writing Made Easy – Part 2

Building on the foundational concepts introduced in Part 1, this workshop focuses on strengthening grant narratives. Participants will learn strategies for clearly articulating program needs, outcomes, and impact using data and storytelling techniques that resonate with funders. This workshop will also cover budgeting basics, including allowable costs, budget justification, and common pitfalls that can weaken funding applications. Participants will identify potential upcoming funding opportunities and leave with practical tools and best practices to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of their grant submissions.

*Speaker: **Sheneika Simmons**, Simmons Leadership Services*

STEM with an "A": Hands-on Art Workshop for OST Programs

This engaging, hands-on workshop explores creative ways to use the arts to build confidence, personal skills, and career readiness. Participants will experience open-ended activities that give students the freedom to imagine, experiment, and develop original solutions. Working in teams, participants will solve an art-based optical illusion challenge, explore aromatic therapeutic play, and experience the fun and wonder of magic as a creative learning tool. Activities strengthen fine motor skills, critical thinking, self-expression, and storytelling using materials such as chalk markers. The workshop highlights how proficiency in the arts supports social-emotional learning and prepares youth for a wide range of career pathways.

*Speaker: **Flo Trujillo**, Retired from Farmington Public Library*



The Human Thread – Cultivating Empathy Through Shared Experiences

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*Speaker: **Madonna Hernandez**, Girls Inc. of Santa Fe*

2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Break and Visit Exhibitors

2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Four Concurrent Breakout Sessions

NM Teen Centers: Emerging Trends, Innovations and Challenges

This panel discussion will bring together leaders from four New Mexico teen centers to explore the realities of serving teens in out-of-school time settings. Through open dialogue and shared reflection, panelists will discuss key topics such as mentorship, teen mental health, food access, creating safe and inclusive spaces, youth-driven program design, and staffing considerations. The session will examine what is working well—and what continues to be challenging—in teen programming, how programs have evolved since the pandemic, and the funding and operational realities unique to teen centers. Participants will gain practical insights, real-world examples, and a deeper understanding of current trends and challenges shaping teen services across New Mexico.

*Speakers: **Robert Stokowy**, Warehouse 505*

***Sarah Martinez**, Boys and Girls Club of Santa Fe*

***Sheldon Hamilton**, Explora*

*Facilitator: **Sandy Campbell**, True Kids 1*

Creators to Changemakers: Using AI to Build Youth-Led Entrepreneurship in OST Programs

This interactive session introduces participants to the NM STEM Innovation Network and its regional hub model. Attendees will learn how hubs coordinate partnerships, share resources, and support statewide STEM priorities, including computer science, career pathways, and rural access. Facilitated networking will help



participants identify collaborators and resources aligned with their community needs.

*Speaker: **Saul Nuñez**, Gadsden Independent School District*

Small Moments, Big Impact: The Secret to Powerful Relationships

Everyday interactions hold the power to shape young people's confidence, growth, and sense of belonging. This session explores how intentional mentoring and relationship-building can transform routine moments into meaningful opportunities for learning and connection. Participants will gain practical strategies to help youth feel seen, supported, and empowered—because when relationships are strong, programs thrive.

*Speakers: **Dr. Angela Redondo** and **Dr. Dawn Berry**, New Mexico Highlands University*

Summer Learning at Public Libraries Across New Mexico

Summer Reading Programs are a cornerstone of community learning, offering far more than books and prizes. This session highlights the statewide impact of summer learning at public libraries, featuring data, best practices, and a local case study. Participants will explore partnership opportunities and discover how libraries support literacy, engagement, and access to enriching OST programming across New Mexico.

*Speaker: **Kelly McCabe**, New Mexico State Library*

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Break and Visit Exhibitors

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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Accelerating Learning in Out-of-School Time Programs

This workshop explores how thoughtfully designed afterschool and camp programs can accelerate student learning while maintaining a joyful, youth-centered environment. Drawing from real-world OST leadership in a Title I community, participants will examine practical strategies for structuring learning time, grouping students, embedding tutoring, and using simple data to guide instruction. Attendees will leave with adaptable tools to strengthen engagement, consistency, and academic outcomes.

*Speaker: **Elizabeth Rojas**, Certified Educator and Program Leader*

Get in the Game: Telling Your Unique Story to Stand Out and Win

In this energetic, gamified workshop, participants will explore fundraising through storytelling, collaboration, and friendly competition. Working in small groups, attendees will brainstorm ideas, match projects to funder profiles, and participate in a Shark Tank–style pitch. Whether new to fundraising or looking to sharpen skills, participants will gain practical insights and hands-on experience to strengthen their funding strategies.

*Speaker: **Laurel Meister Schmuck**, The Grant Plant Inc.*

The "T" in STEM: Technology-Based Curricula for OST Programs

Dive into hands-on technology experiences that showcase how innovation comes to life in OST settings. Participants will rotate through interactive stations featuring circuits, digital media, and virtual reality career exploration. This workshop offers a practical overview of technology-based curricula that spark curiosity, build skills, and connect students to real-world STEM and career pathways.

*Speakers: **Kelsey Moore** and **Rina Viramontes**, New Mexico State University STEM Outreach Center*

4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

General Session and Wrap Up

