



Mississippi Science Fest Presented by C Spire Foundation Hosts 6th Annual C3 Jr. Coding Challenge at Mississippi Children's Museum

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Press Release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jackson, Miss. – On Thursday, Sept. 18th, 24 teams from across the state participated in C Spire's C3 Jr. Coding Challenge at the Mississippi Children's Museum in Jackson and Meridian.

C3 Jr. is a coding challenge uniquely designed for elementary-age students to learn 21st century technology skills. C Spire mentors guide teams comprised of four fourth-grade students through coding challenges.

During the challenge, teams used critical thinking and problem-solving skills to design an obstacle course and code a robot to complete the course. A new addition to the challenge this year included a C3 Jr. chatbot, built by C Spire in collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS), which helped students with event information, guidance on event rules and assistance with coding during the competition. Team members who showed an excellent attitude, team spirit, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills during the challenge received awards. The top three teams received trophies and tech-related prizes.

"Students participating in the C3 Jr. Coding Challenge continue to show an impressive understanding of computer programming and how technology helps solve unique problems," said Brad Carpenter, C Spire's Chief Operating Officer. "Partnering with AWS to create the AI chat bot was not only a helpful tool for the students, but also an example of how two technology companies can collaborate to make a positive impact."

Participants at MCM-Jackson: Beechwood Elementary School, Gary Road Intermediate, Highland Elementary School, John Hopkins Elementary School, Madison Crossing Elementary School, McWillie Elementary School, New Hope Christian School, Northshore Elementary School, Northwest Rankin Elementary School, Oakdale Elementary School, Richland Upper Elementary School, Spann Elementary School, St. Andrew's Lower School, and The Redeemer School

Winners of C3 Jr. Coding Challenge at MCM-Jackson:

First: Madison Crossing Elementary

Second: Northwest Rankin Elementary School

Third: St. Andrew's Lower School

Participants at MCM-Meridian: Enterprise Elementary School, Henderson Ward Stewart Elementary School, Lamar School, Neshoba Central Elementary School, Newton County Elementary School, Northeast Elementary School, Parkview Elementary School, Poplar Springs Elementary School, Quitman Upper Elementary School, Southeast Lauderdale Elementary School

Winners of C3 Jr. Coding Challenge at MCM-Meridian:

First: Enterprise Elementary School

Second: Henderson Ward Stewart Elementary School

Third: Lamar School

The mission of Mississippi Science Fest is to showcase STEAM subjects and engage students and educators across the state in a fun, interactive learning environment that promotes science education and workforce development. On Saturday, Sept. 20th, guests can explore all four LeFleur Museum District museums for one low ticket price of \$10! MCM-Meridian will host their 5th annual Science Saturday in conjunction with the Mississippi Science Festival.

Children and families will have the opportunity to interact with STEAM professionals, engage in hands-on activities, and explore exciting experiments and exhibits.

Events for the Mississippi Science Fest events will take place on September 15-20, 2025. A full schedule of activities for the festival and event tickets can be found at www.mssciencefest.org. Event tickets will admit you to all four LMD museums on Saturday, September 20th.

About the Mississippi Children’s Museum

The Mississippi Children’s Museum (MCM) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission of creating unparalleled experiences to inspire excellence and a lifelong joy of learning in all children. MCM’s two award-winning museums in Jackson and Meridian collectively offer over 100,000-square feet of exhibits and educational programming designed around five primary initiatives, Literacy, STEAM, Health and Nutrition, Cultural Arts, and Mississippi Heritage – the keys to helping our children mature into healthy and productive adult learners. MCM offers exceptional resources for children, families, and educators through MCM at Home virtual programming, traveling exhibits and programs, community outreach, *Launch into Learning* afterschool program, professional development for educators, and *Talk from the Start* and *Reach Out and Read*, initiatives for parents and caregivers to promote language development in children from birth to five years old. MCM is honored to have received an Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal, the Mississippi Tourism Association Governor’s Award for Travel Attraction of the Year, and USA Today’s ‘10Best Travel Award for Best Children’s Museum. Learn more: www.mschildrensmuseum.org.

About the Mississippi Children’s Museum – Meridian

The Mississippi Children’s Museum - Meridian (MCM-Meridian) is the East Mississippi satellite campus of the Mississippi Children’s Museum located in Jackson, MS (MCM-Jackson)—a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that creates unparalleled experiences to inspire excellence and a lifelong joy of learning. MCM-Meridian is a 25,000-square-foot facility with exhibit space designed around five primary initiatives: Literacy, STEAM, Health and Nutrition, Cultural Arts, and Mississippi History woven throughout all galleries. Outdoors is a 25,000-square-foot exhibit gallery that allows children a safe and magical space to explore and enrich the learning experience. The museum’s exhibits, programs, and outreach opportunities provide engaging, hands-on activities for children of all ages. MCM – Meridian is a strategic part of MCM-Jackson, which is dedicated to inspiring all of Mississippi’s children from all backgrounds to discover and achieve their potential. Both museums offer excellent resources for children, families, and educators, such as the Launch into Learning afterschool program, professional development for educators, and innovative literacy and language development programs like *Talk from the Start* and *Reach Out and Read*. MCM-Jackson and MCM-Meridian have received numerous awards, including the Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal, the Mississippi Tourism Association Governor’s Award for Travel Attraction of the Year, and the USA Today’s 10Best Travel Award for Best Children’s Museum. To learn more about MCM-Meridian, visit www.mcmmeridian.org.

About the C Spire Foundation

The C Spire Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization funded by C Spire. Its mission is to inspire a passion to be the best and help transform the areas C Spire serves by providing grants for STEM and STEAM education (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) for students in grades K-12 and institutions of higher learning, primarily in Mississippi.

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