

EDUCATION PROGRAMS 2025-2026

Education programs are supported in part by the
national **grid**
Foundation



The Vanderbilt Museum Education Department

The Vanderbilt Museum and Reichert Planetarium offer quality programs that meet the specific needs of K-12 educators in New York. We support New York State learning standards and practices with special emphasis on STEM education and the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education Framework.

Programs concentrate on William K. Vanderbilt II's (1878-1944) desire that his marine, natural history, and ethnographic collections promote appreciation and understanding of the marvelous diversity of life, other cultures, and scientific knowledge. Planetarium programming, more specifically, focuses on scientific knowledge and seeks to capture Mr. Vanderbilt's sense of adventure and exploration through state-of-the-art entertainment.

Why your students should visit the Vanderbilt Museum.

- ▼ Most technologically advanced planetarium on Long Island
- ▼ Twenty-two wild-animal dioramas
- ▼ World's largest example of fish taxidermy: 32-foot whale shark
- ▼ The historic mansion is a time capsule of the Great Gatsby era



PLANNING YOUR VISIT

School visits are by appointment only.

Call 631-854-5539 or write

dawn@vanderbiltmuseum.org to schedule a visit.

School visits may be paid with Eastern Suffolk, Nassau, and Western Suffolk BOCES funds.

Contact your district office for information.

FEES

- ▼ One-hour Museum program: \$10
- ▼ Two-hour Museum program: \$14
- ▼ One-hour Planetarium program: \$10
- ▼ Extended Planetarium program: add \$5.50 per additional half-hour*

* School trips can be customized by adding 30-minute shows

Combination Tickets

- ▼ One-hour Museum program and Planetarium show: \$15
- ▼ Two-hour Museum program and Planetarium show: \$18

Complimentary Admissions and Discounts

One complimentary admission will be issued for every 25 paid admissions. The Museum offers a \$1 discount per person for September, January, and February trips

Schedule

- ▼ One-hour Museum programs: 10:00 am, 11:15 am, and 12:45 pm
- ▼ Two-hour Museum programs: 10:00 am and 12:15 pm
- ▼ Planetarium shows: 10:00 am, 11:15 am, and 12:45 pm

Director of Education

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Professional Development for Educators

The Architecture & History of a Gold Coast Estate

November 4, 2025 | 9 am-11 am | \$18

Registration is online only.

For groups paying with a purchase order, call 631-854-5539
or write dawn@vanderbiltmuseum.org.



Scan to Register Online

MUSEUM PROGRAMS

Science Safari

Grades Pre-K - 4 | One Hour

Tour the collections of the Memorial Wing and Stoll Wing wildlife dioramas and examine preserved mammal, reptile, and bird specimens.

Sea Search

Grades Pre-K - 5 | One Hour

Tour the Hall of Fishes, learn about William Vanderbilt's expeditions to collect for his museum, and examine preserved invertebrate, fish, and mammal specimens.

Sharks

Grades 1 - 5 | One Hour

Visit the Hall of Fishes and wildlife dioramas to discover the fascinating variety of sharks in the world's oceans, examine preserved shark specimens, and create shark-tooth necklaces.

The Gold Coast

Grades 4 - 12 | One Hour

Tour one of the few remaining Gold Coast estates and discover William Vanderbilt's passion for automobile racing, yachting, and collecting.

The World of Mr. Vanderbilt

Grades 2 - 12 | One Hour

Explore the natural history collections and learn about William Vanderbilt's passion for automobile racing, exploration, and collecting for his museum.

The Vanderbilt Mummy (Virtual & On-Site)

Grades 5 - 8 | One Hour

On-site we can accommodate up to 30 people

Explore a 21st Dynasty Egyptian mummy, coffin and x-rays, and learn about William Vanderbilt's visits to Egypt.

Young Environmentalists

Grades 3 - 5 | One Hour

Accommodates up to 60 people

Explore the collections and learn how global warming affects the planet's ecosystems, examine corals, and discover ways to help in your community.

“ Visit our website for a complete list of programs. Vanderbiltmuseum.org ”

MORE MUSEUM PROGRAMS

Animal Habitats

Grades 1-4 | Two Hours

Tour the Memorial Wing and Stoll Wing, discover the diversity of life from the rainforests to the Sudan grasslands, examine preserved specimens, and create miniature dioramas.



Butterflies and Moths

Grades 2-4 | Two Hours

Students will use costumes to illustrate the characteristics of insects, search for specimens, and design their own lepidoptera.

Egyptian Mummies

Grades 5 - 8 | Two Hours

Students will examine a 21st Dynasty mummy and coffin, and recent X-rays, and create hieroglyph bookmarks.

Identification and Classification

Grades 4 - 8 | Two Hours

Visit the Hall of Fishes, examine preserved marine specimens, explore taxonomy, and create individual watercolor illustrations.

If Walls Could Talk: The Architecture of a Gold Coast Mansion

Grades 4 - 12 | Two Hours

Discover the personality of William Vanderbilt's summer residence, explore the Memorial Wing galleries, and search for architectural elements in the courtyard.

Marine Habitats

Grades 3 - 6 | Two Hours

Visit the Hall of Fishes, explore ocean ecosystems, examine preserved corals, shells, fish, and teeth, and create watercolor illustrations of specimens on display.

The Netherlands to New York

Grades 4 - 12 | Two Hours

Visit the summer residence and collections of William K. Vanderbilt II and discover how the Vanderbilt family contributed to the development of New York State.

Scientific Illustration

Grades 7 - 12 | Two hours

Tour the Hall of Fishes, explore the structure of preserved fish and marine invertebrates, learn about the methods of preservation used in the collections, and create detailed watercolor illustrations.



PLANETARIUM LIVE LECTURE PROGRAMS - ONE HOUR

Unique to the Reichert Planetarium, all live lecture programs are presented by an astronomy educator.



NEW! Alien Safari

Grades 5 - 8

Are aliens out there? Students will take on the role of astrobiologists in this thrilling live and interactive show combining science, storytelling, and space exploration. We begin our safari by examining the basic building blocks required for life to exist and exploring the most extreme environments our planet has to offer. Then, blast off to discover where aliens could exist in the universe, from planets and moons in our own Solar System to mysterious exoplanets orbiting distant stars in the Milky Way Galaxy.

Let's Look Up!

Pre-K - K

This program encourages young students to observe and explore the world around them and introduces them to the wonders of the sky. They will learn about clouds, storms, rainbows, and the colors of the sky, and how Earth's rotation causes the changes between night and day. Learn how people looked at the night sky and drew constellations using the stars, and how some points of light aren't stars at all. Observe the changing shapes of the Moon over time and finally take a trip through the Solar System to visit and learn about the planets.

Space Adventure to the Moon

Grades 1 - 3

This exciting show begins on Earth where students discover the water cycle, learn about different types of clouds, and find out how rainbows form and where to spot one. We then change our focus to our closest neighbor in space and explore the surface features and changing phases of the Moon. Finally, students learn about the historic Apollo 11 program and are whisked to the Moon themselves to watch real footage of scientific experiments and discuss upcoming lunar missions.

Meet the Planets

Grades 1 - 3

Our Sun is a star that harbors a solar system full of planets, dwarf planets, and more. On this trip through the Solar System, students will learn how the Sun influences the planets and affects the water cycle on Earth. They also will watch the planets revolve around the Sun and see how Earth's rotation causes the changes between night and day. From the nighttime side of Earth, observe the constellations visible on the night of your visit, and learn how to distinguish planets from stars. Visit each planet, discuss their characteristics in depth, and observe the changing phases of the Moon.

Exploring the Solar System

Grades 4 - 6

Beginning on Earth, students will observe the constellations visible during the season of their visit and learn how to distinguish planets from stars in the nighttime sky. Our tour doesn't only take place on Earth—we will "blast off" to get a closer look at each destination in our Solar System. Students will witness the planets revolving around the Sun and discover how Earth's rotation and revolution affects our daily lives. We will visit the Sun, each planet, the asteroid belt, and more, discussing the characteristics of each location in depth before returning safely back to Earth.

ECLIPSE!

Grades 3 - 12

Eclipses are rare and exciting events! Thanks to our modern understanding of the motions of the Earth, Moon, and Sun, modern observers can enjoy them to the fullest. Students will observe the Sun and Moon's apparent motions across the sky, examine Earth and the Moon's orbital paths, discover how celestial objects' shadows create lunar and solar eclipses, and view a simulation of the next eclipse visible from Long Island.

Take a Hike Through the Solar System

Grades 6 - 8 | 2.5 Hours

This multidisciplinary education program helps students discover Earth's place in the universe by using the amazing capabilities of the planetarium theater. Students will then embark on a guided walk on a scaled model of the solar system on our "Solar System Hiking Trail," which was built recently on the grounds of the Vanderbilt Museum adjacent to the planetarium. The program can be tailored to meet the needs of your students.

Maximum capacity: 30 students | Fee: \$16

Take a Hike Through the Solar System is available in September, October, November, April, May and June.

Night Sky LIVE!

Grades 9 - 12

This planetarium presentation uses the star projector to its fullest capabilities. We begin by observing the brilliant night sky that can be seen on Long Island from anyone's backyard or neighborhood. Topics include seasonal constellations, the Moon, stars, planets, and fascinating deep-sky objects. Students will learn about the life cycles of stars, the electromagnetic spectrum, and observatories used to make scientific discoveries. Finally, we leave Earth behind and embark on a tour of the entire observable universe.



Discover the Universe:

TRAVELING ASTRONOMY PROGRAM

Bring the wonders of the universe to your classroom with our *Discover the Universe: Traveling Astronomy Program*! We provide interactive presentations and hands-on demonstrations to create an engaging and educational STEM astronomy experience. All schools are welcome and certain eligible schools may receive FREE presentations thanks to a generous grant from the National Grid Foundation.

For more information about this program, visit vanderbiltmuseum.org/we-come-to-you



PLANETARIUM FULLDOME SHOWS: ONE HOUR

A “fulldome” show is an award-winning, pre-recorded planetarium program with stunning, immersive visuals projected overhead on our 60-foot dome. Each show is 30 minutes long and, with the addition of a 30-minute live star talk by an astronomy educator, becomes one hour long.

One World One Sky: Big Bird’s Adventure

Pre-K - Grade 2

Elmo and Big Bird live in the United States, and Hu Hu Zhu lives far away in China. The trio discovers they see the same stars at night, and on an imaginary trip to the Moon, they discover how different it is from Earth.

The Little Star that Could

Pre-K - Grade 3

Little Star is an average yellow star in search of planets of his own to protect and warm. Along the way, he meets other stars and learns what makes each type of star special. Eventually, Little Star finds and meets each of his planets.

Earth, Moon & Sun

Grades 3 - 6

Coyote, a character from Native American oral traditions, explores characteristics of the Earth, Moon, and Sun—including craters formed by asteroid and meteor impacts, Maria (seas), mountains, and NASA’s historic lunar landings—along with some common misconceptions.

We Are Guardians

Grades 5 - 12

Join us on a journey into, under, and around the many ecosystems across our planet. Discover how each component fits together, and how the health of each part is vital to the health of Planet Earth. Find out how, with the help of satellites and scientific study, we can understand the links between human activities and climate change, and what we can do to work together to improve the health of our shared home.

Solar System Odyssey

Grades 4 - 8

Join a veteran spaceflight captain and young tech genius as they search for habitable environments among the planets and moons in our solar system.

Stars

Grades 4 - 12

Narrated by Mark Hamill. Journey to the farthest reaches of the galaxy and experience both the awesome beauty and destructive power of Stars. Along the way, the constellation The Hunter will guide students through the history of astronomy.



We list a selection of shows in this brochure, but we offer many more. We encourage you to visit our website for a complete list of programs, NYS Science Learning Standards, and resources for teachers.



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The Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Education Department | Vanderbiltmuseum.org

NEW! TRAVELING PLANETARIUM

Get ready to bring an immersive experience to your school!

The Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum's Reichert Planetarium is hitting the road. With our portable planetarium, we provide visually stunning, engaging, and interactive lessons that give students the opportunity to actively participate and enrich their learning experience. Our inflatable GeoDome Theater is wheelchair-accessible and can accommodate 25 students.

FEES

Initial Program – \$400

Additional same-day programs – \$75 each

Schools may book up to 3 programs per day.

Schools wishing to book the portable planetarium must comply with the following requirements:

- ▼ Minimum 14' ceiling height clear of any hanging lights, projectors, or other equipment.
- ▼ Minimum 31' x 31' floor space.
- ▼ An entrance on the ground level, or accessible by ramp or elevator.
- ▼ Indoor use only.

For more information please visit our website at vanderbiltmuseum.org/traveling-planetarium/

