

# ATLANTIC SCIENCE LINKS ASSOCIATION



ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

2014

## NEARLY 6800 STUDENTS IMPACTED BY ASLA'S SERVICES LAST YEAR

The SITS program experienced a significant increase in numbers during 2013-2014. We reached a record number of more than 6800 students, 1200 more than the previous school year through Speakers Bureau activities, science project mentorships, science fair judging, field and laboratory visits and the Climate Change Action Pack, Ecosystem projects which are based on province's science curriculum.

In the past year, we received 104 requests (in all disciplines in science) from schools and 77 were filled by our dedicated volunteers. These requests included classroom presentations, science fairs judging, field and lab visits, science fair mentorships and conference presentations. It should be noted that four field trips were arranged allowing many elementary students to experience high tech laboratories (Biology, Physics and Geology), museum, aquarium, display laboratories, and to explore hands on scientific activities. Via all these activities ASLA enriched the scientific experience of nearly 6800 students.

The 2013-2014 school year saw greater diversity in the types of activities SITS was involved in. Some of the science fair projects mentored by our high profile volunteers won prizes at both regional and national levels. Science teachers and educators were benefited from ASLA's three different presentations namely "Climate change", "Microbes" and "Science Education" with hands on activities and field sessions at the Atlantic Science Teachers conference. Nearly 70 DVD's on "Climate Change Action Pack" and "Earth and Climate" were provided to the teachers attended the conference. The relationships formed between the education and science communities through these activities are often long-lasting, with SITS volunteers providing presentations and resources to schools for years following their initial visit.

## OUR SERVICES AND RESOURCES

*Classroom presentations*

*Speakers for career fairs*

*Science fair judges*

*Science mentors*

*Workplace visits*

*Field trips*

*Climate Change Action Pack*

*Ecosystem projects*

*Workshops for teachers*



Elementary students at a biology lab in Dalhousie University

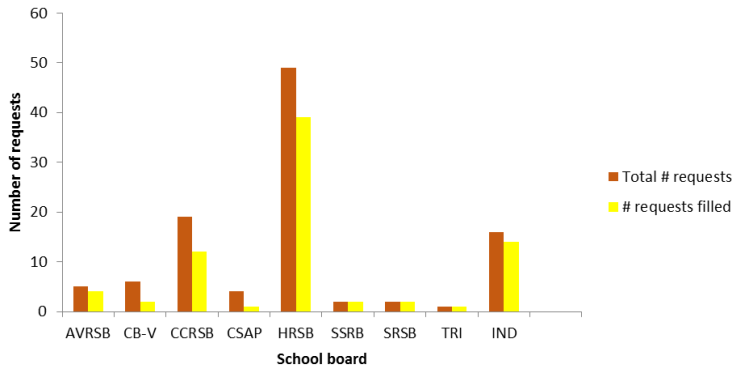
## VISITING RESEARCH LABS FOR HANDS ON ACTIVITIES BECOMES POPULAR

*"It shows the importance of getting students involved with science at a young age"* Stephen Payne (Dalhousie University) in 'Dal news'

*"When students meet someone at the forefront of research, it can show them that a career in science is exciting."* Rajesh Rajaselvam (ASLA) in 'Dal news'

Read the story 'School visits to Dalhousie science labs a hit for students and teachers' in Dal news at '<http://www.dal.ca/news.html>'

**Total number of requests vs number of requests filled**

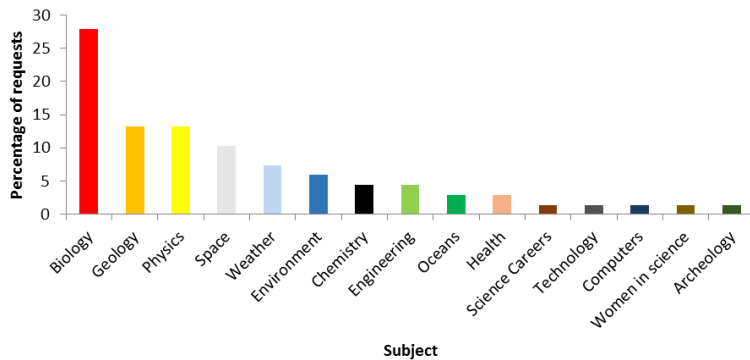


## ASLA RECEIVES REQUEST FROM ALL OVER NS

As in previous years, the majority (47%) of requests came from schools within the Halifax Regional School Board followed by the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (18.3%) and the Independent School Board (15.4%).

All requests by South Regional Schools, Strait Regional Schools and Tri-County schools were filled. There were high fill rates, 88% for Halifax independent schools and 80% for both Halifax and Annapolis Valley regional schools. Chignecto-Central region showed 63% fill rate. Volunteers from post-secondary and research institutions in these areas contributed to achieve this trend.

**Percentage of requests by subjects**



## BIOLOGY, GEOLOGY AND PHYSICS REMAIN IN HIGH DEMAND

This year, ASLA received requests for many disciplines. Like the last two school years, requests in Biology were the highest at 28% followed by Geology and Physics, both at 13% of the total requests.

## TEACHERS' COMMENTS

I hope that with the growing need of new ways to educate the minds of this generation that we have this service continually available to us in the future.

Thanks so much for all you have done in providing us with great resource people. Look forward to another year with SITS.

I also love learning new things and enjoyed the experience thoroughly. I hope that he will continue to visit our class again next year.

Thanks for judging at our science fair. It ran incredibly smoothly as a result of your commitment to evaluating projects and sharing your thoughts with each individual.

We really believe that these experiences enrich the lives of our students and help them to grow as learners, athletes and good citizens of their community.

We are pleased and honored to have had your services (as judges) at our school science fair.

Thank you for the excellent service in promoting science in our schools.

*“The SITS program brings opportunities and experiences to students and to educators that we may not readily be exposed to”*

*“Having the students spend a day on campus is always fabulous and access to labs that are far beyond the reach of the typical junior high classroom “*



SITS volunteers evaluated the science fair projects of nearly 875 students throughout the year. This is 275 more than our previous year accomplishment.

Many new participants, especially graduate students showed interest due to the simplified process for requesting judges.

ASLA's volunteers judging at the 'Halifax Regional Science Fair'



## NEWS IN PICTURES: ACTIVITIES OF ASLA



'Career Pathways' presentation at the 'Science Expo'



Display for teachers at the 'AST Conference'



ASLA's session on 'ACORN Field Day'



Elementary students at the 'Dal Museum'

## ASLA WELCOMES REQUESTS FROM SCHOOLS AND MORE VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN

SITS provides several services (listed on the front page), but our most popular by far is the Speakers' Bureau. Through the Speakers' Bureau, we assist schools in finding volunteer scientists and innovators to speak to students across the province. And the best part is, **it's completely free!** So you can bring exciting, hands-on science learning into your classroom at no charge. To get a Request Form or to find out more about the Speakers' Bureau go to <http://atlanticsciencelinks.dal.ca> or contact us by phone or email

Strong volunteer commitment helped us to fill 74% of the requests made by schools in Nova Scotia. Science outreach initiatives at Dalhousie and Saint Mary's Universities added some strength to our volunteer base as new groups linked with SITS to strengthen their ability to connect to P-12 teachers. With the increasing demand we still need more volunteers (especially in rural areas of the province) to reach many more students. To register yourself as a volunteer, please go to <http://atlanticsciencelinks.dal.ca> or contact the coordinator at [sits@dal.ca](mailto:sits@dal.ca).

## Contact Us

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We are on the web and Facebook  
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## OUR SPONSORS

ASLA continues to receive funds from NSERC's PromoScience grant, Dalhousie University, Education Department of NS, Engineers NS and Maritimes Northeast Pipeline. We display our funders' logos here to thank them for their generous support and encouragement of science literacy and outreach in Nova Scotia. If you are interested in becoming one of our sponsors, please contact the Executive Director at [sits@dal.ca](mailto:sits@dal.ca).



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