



VASE Annual Report for 2024-25

FY2024-25 marks another productive year for the Vermont Academy of Science and Engineering (VASE) despite the challenges facing higher education at the local, regional and national levels. Herein is a report of VASE events since the last annual report that was filed in FY2023-24.

VASE is grateful for the continuing support of the Vermont Technology Council (\$20K), a \$5K donation from an anonymous donor, and donations from the VASE Board and its membership in FY24-25. Despite this generous support, however, VASE was only able to offer a single round of grant disbursements in the past year. Both Small Equipment Grants to schools and Hands-on Science and Technology Grants to after-school programs were offered in the Fall of 2024. Altogether \$23,344 in VASE funds (\$11,554 SEG and \$11,690 HOST) were awarded to help propel STEM education in Vermont, with demand far exceeding VASE's funding capacity. In FY25-26, VASE is committed to avoiding deficit spending and will instead focus on accumulating funds for future grants disbursement. To this end, we will close out FY24-25 with a slightly positive balance and anticipate a similar surplus in FY25-26.

In FY24-25 the Development subcommittee centered its efforts on identifying and tracking potential sponsors from outside the Academy. Customizable solicitation letters were prepared for an ongoing fundraising campaign with an emphasis on relationship building. We expect VASE's new "science statement" coupled with an updated brochure and a website makeover will facilitate online donations, which for the first time in FY25-26 will include \$75.00 per annum membership dues.

VASE participated in a mentoring lunch for area high school students at the UVM Lung STEM cell conference in July, spearheaded by VASE member Dan Weiss. WCAX aired a positive segment and overall, the event demonstrated significant student interest in STEM and potential for workforce development in Vermont.

Over the course of the past year, VASE expanded its Board of Directors to include four new additions from the VASE membership. VASE also inducted nine new professionals into the Academy, hailing from both academia and industry. In addition, VASE hosted two in-person meetings; the annual meeting and dinner at Middlebury College in the fall with Vermont State Climatologist Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux serving as keynote speaker, and a spring gathering at Beta Technologies in South Burlington, VT where our newest inductees delivered "flash talk" presentations in their areas of expertise. VASE also honored this year's VASE Outstanding Science Teacher of the Year awardee, Mr. Mark Pendergrass of the Mater Christi School in Burlington, VT for his significant contributions to middle school STEM education. The fall and spring meetings were very well attended by our science and engineering professionals, and they both brokered compelling discussions and fruitful liaisons.

VASE looks forward to a successful year ahead. With the continuing support of the VTC, membership dues and donations, and an active campaign to solicit new VASE sponsorships, we expect VASE will continue to expand its impact throughout the state. Attached please find VASE's projected budget for 2025-26.

