

Biography

307BW/STARBASE Louisiana

Benjamin Williamson

2.0 Coordinator

Benjamin Williamson is the 2.0 Coordinator of the STARBASE Louisiana program, sponsored by the Department of Defense at Barksdale Air Force Base. As 2.0 Coordinator he collaborates heavily with the STARBASE 2.0 team—along with Executive and Deputy Directors of STARBASE Louisiana—to design and implement an advanced curriculum which, coupled with mentoring from STEM educators and professionals, is aimed at engaging middle and high school students in STEM investigations in a fun and informal educational setting.

Benjamin initially joined the STARBASE Louisiana team in August of 2011 as a Program Instructor in the baseline academy program for 5th grade students. In 2012, he was promoted in order to serve as Coordinator of the new STARBASE 2.0 program—the second phase in STARBASE Louisiana’s STEM outreach—which is designed to build on and extend the impact of the STARBASE 5th grade program. When the STARBASE Louisiana 2.0 program was founded, a major goal was to create a STEM pipeline through middle and into high school. In 2016, under Benjamin’s leadership, the STARBASE 2.0 program achieved this goal by expanding its offerings to high school students. Over the years, the STARBASE 2.0 program has grown from 3 clubs at one Bossier middle school to over a dozen clubs at 8 middle and high schools in Caddo and Bossier. The program has served over 600 student participants to date, many of whom have elected to participate for multiple years. Benjamin considers it a great privilege to have built relationships with the many students, volunteers, and teachers who have been the heart of the STARBASE 2.0 program in its formative years.

Benjamin assists with the implementation of the STARBASE program and contributes to the development of curriculum and materials. He has served the national DoD STARBASE program by reviewing the CAD curriculum designed by engineers at PTC for its software Creo Parametric, and has presented on STEM education topics and practices at local, regional, and national conferences.

Benjamin was born in Shreveport, Louisiana and is a 2010 graduate from Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. In 2010, he moved to New Orleans where he taught 7th and 8th grade math in the Recovery School District. While teaching in New Orleans, he completed the Louisiana Practitioner Teacher Program’s New Teacher Project, an alternative certification route ranked as one of the top performing programs in the state by the Louisiana Board of Regents. Upon his return to Shreveport, he was thrilled to join the STARBASE staff and find a home with other STEM nerds. In his free time, Benjamin enjoys acting in local theatre and short film projects, reading, writing, and running half marathons, playing and officiating soccer games, singing in his church choir, and spending time with friends and family.



Teaching History

2012 - Present	STARBASE 2.0 Coordinator
2011 - 2012	STARBASE Program Instructor
2010 - 2011	7 th -8 th Grade Math, H.C. Schaumburg Elementary, New Orleans, LA

Education and Certifications

2011	Louisiana Practitioner Teacher Program – New Orleans, LA Certified in Secondary Math, grades 6-12 Highly Qualified in Middle School Science, grades 4-8
2010	Texas A&M University – College Station, B.S. in Sociology Global Certificate in Sociology

Publications and Presentations

Mar 2019	ITEEA Annual Conference – “New Technologies in the Engineering Educator’s Toolbox”
Mar 2017	ITEEA Annual Conference – “Sourcing and Strengthening Community Support for STEM”
Mar 2015	Louisiana STEM Girls Collaborative Project Conference – “Middle School Afterschool STEM Clubs”
Oct 2012	LSTA – “Sneaking in STEM”
May 2012	NSTA STEM Forum and Expo – “Sneaking in STEM”
Nov 2011	NSTA Regional Conference – “Sneaking in STEM”; “Brain Basics for Dummies”
May 2010	Texas A&M University Honors Undergraduate Research Fellows Thesis – “Love, Sacrifice, and Honor: Warrior Virtues and the American Soldiers’ Experience of World War II”

Accomplishments, Awards, and Recognitions

2016	Mike Neden STEM Champion Award, International STEM Education Association
2015	Real World Science Seminar, The National World War II Museum
2015	Rotary Club of Shreveport Civic Grant recipient
2014	AFCEA Science Teaching Tools Grant winner, sponsored by Boeing
2014	Alan Shephard Technology in Education Award nominee
2013	LSTA Essie Beck “Rising Star” Science Education Award nominee
2012	National DoD STARBASE PTC/CAD Elite Curriculum Cadre
2010	Summa Cum Laude Graduate – Texas A&M University One of 24 Texas A&M 2010 Honors Undergraduate Research Fellows One of only 50 graduates in class to receive University and Foundation Honors Distinctions
2009	Phi Beta Kappa National Honor Society

Professional Organizations

International Technology and Engineering Educators Association
Louisiana Science Teachers Association
National Science Teachers Association