



PERSONAL  
GENETICS  
EDUCATION &  
DIALOGUE



2024

# Annual Report



# INTRODUCTION

2024 marked a new chapter for PGED. We remain committed to serving educators and students. In tandem, we are ramping up our engagement outside the classroom.

Our team has been hard at work to shape a new generation of genetics stories in television, film, and other media through a partnership with the Social Impact Entertainment (SIE) Society, and collaborate with communities to support meaningful genetics engagement in urban and rural America—from libraries and museums to places of worship and community health centers.



# VISION

We envision a future where genetics serves all. By promoting widespread awareness, active engagement, and individual empowerment, PGED is helping to pave the way toward a just and equitable future.

## MISSION

PGED raises awareness and inspires curiosity, reflection, and dialogue about genetics.

We create resources and offer programs that explore the relevance and impact of genetics in people's lives. By highlighting the "personal" in genetics, we strive to help people build knowledge and confidence to speak up, ask questions, and make informed decisions based on their needs and values.

We believe deeply that it is through the reciprocal exchange of knowledge and perspectives that people are empowered to create a future where genetics serves all.

This work is very personal, and the approach matters as much as the content. We scaffold our programs and resources with three key steps:

### 01. CONNECT

Build on-ramps for people to consider the role of genetics in our lives and society.

### 02. LEARN

Grounded in science, recognizing that science is a process with a social, cultural, and political context.

### 03. ENGAGE

Make space for people to explore and discuss different values, perspectives, and worldviews.

# ON THE GROUND

Our goal is to make connections with people in their communities.

By connecting with communities, we can share and amplify stories about genetics that are personally relevant and engaging.

This year, our 6 staff members worked together to reach

**4,409 people**

through

**39 events.**

We showed up in many different spaces:



Webinars



Conferences



Libraries



Workshops



STEM Festivals



Schools &  
Universities



Spiritual Centers



Health Centers



Film Screenings



Museums &  
Science Centers

# PROGRAM AREAS

In a landscape where genetics intersects with ethics and societal values, PGED's role as a catalyst for informed dialogue and equitable engagement remains paramount.

Through our multifaceted initiatives, PGED continues to spark conversation, foster understanding, and pave the way for a more genetically literate society.



## Serving Students & Educators

We create curriculum & workshops to bring the cutting edge of genetics & its ethical dimensions into classrooms.



## Informal Education

We offer personal genetics programs in our local communities, including libraries, museums, places of worship, & more.



## Science Gatherings

We deliver programs that support science professionals to practice inclusive & impactful public engagement.



## Creating New Resources

We create resources that invite people to explore real-world applications of genetic technologies.



## Growing Partnerships

Our partners help us amplify our impact by bringing personal genetics to their communities.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:  
EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Brunswick, ME

### JAX Teaching the Genome Generation Workshop

We shared five PGED lessons with the educators in attendance and received enthusiastic responses.

“The bioethics lectures on both the American Eugenics Movement and Sex, Genetics and Athletics were very enlightening. The lectures **made me think about genetics and heredity in a whole new light...** meaning that it isn't always cut and dry.”

“...definitely benefited the most from the discussions of bioethics. It's very easy to study science in a vacuum without recognizing other disciplines and aspects of society, and **this was a good reminder for me to stay more informed.**”

Virtual

A student shares the findings of their genetic ancestry test in class.

### PGED Summer Professional Development Workshop

Teachers were introduced to six PGED lessons and learned how to implement them in the classroom.



Virtual

### Racial Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Science Education

Rob presented a webinar about “Discussing Race in Medical Education”, hosted by LabXchange.

Virtual

### Center for Excellence in Education Webinar

Rob presented a training webinar about “Pathways in Medical Genetics”.

# A NEW CHAPTER

After 18 years as the Personal Genetics Education Project, we are excited to share that PGED is launching a new chapter in our work!

Core to PGED is our belief that genetics will best serve humanity when people everywhere are aware, engaged, and empowered. As a bridge connecting science and society, we remain steadfastly committed to raising awareness about genetics.

## New Name & Logo - Still PGED



The Personal Genetics Education Project is now "**Personal Genetics Education & Dialogue**" (still PGED, but in all caps). This update reflects our interactive approach that fosters two-way communication about issues at the intersection of genetics and society.



*Our new logo incorporates interlocking speech bubbles to represent dialogue in a shape suggestive of the DNA double helix,*

*and uses color gradients to symbolize the evolving nature of ideas and opinions through conversation.*

At the same time, we recognize that new strategies are needed to match the rapid pace of discovery in our field and growing societal polarization.

We recommit ourselves to inspiring dialogue, making space for people to engage with different values, perspectives, and worldviews.



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# NEW WEBSITE

We launched a new website with improved functionality and accessibility.



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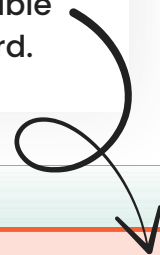
From medicine to  
ancestry, genetics  
touches us all.

Learn, share, and build a better future.  
Let's talk genetics!

Support Our Work



Central to our new website is the **Resource Hub**, a database of all PGED resources, searchable by title, topic, type, or educational standard.



Welcome to Our Resource Hub

Where designated, PGED resources are now available through a Creative Commons license that allows anyone to share and adapt our content with attribution.

**Explore:**

Search by Keyword

  
**Filter by:**

Topic

  
**Resource Type**  
**Common Core Standards**  
**NGSS**  

Search

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

## COMMUNITIES: LIBRARIES, STEM FESTIVALS, & HEALTH CENTERS

Los Angeles, CA

### LA Public Library Programs at Robertson & Palisades

Helen engaged LA community members in discussions about consumer testing and healthcare.

Simsbury, CT

### Personal Genetics Program at Simsbury Public Library

Gill presented about personal genetics and genetic technologies to community members.

North Haven, CT

### Ancestry Testing Program at North Haven Memorial Library

Gill presented about personal genetics and ancestry testing to community members.

Rockville, MD

### Rockville Science Day

Rob explored personal genetics and the ethical dimensions with visitors of all ages.

Cambridge, MA

### Cambridge Science Festival: Neighborhood & Carnival

Robin and Gill launched PGED's exhibit, "ENGAGE! A Genetics Conversation Catalyst".



Farmington, CT

### From Bench to Bedside at UConn Health Hospital

Gill moderated a discussion with geneticists about precision medicine for patients and families.

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHTS

Sparked by our admiration for the people & organizations we've worked with, we created our Community Spotlight series.

The series showcases remarkable people we've connected with through our mission to deliver high-quality education and dialogue about genetics and related topics. In 2024, we published 7 spotlights featuring 10 friends of PGED.



**Shoumita Dasgupta**  
Genetics Educator



**Tobias Deml**  
Filmmaker



**Yvonne Chan**  
Community Science Educator



**Eric 'Iwakeli'i Tong**  
Community Science Educator



**Richard Randolph**  
Pastor



**Roshni Patel**  
Scientist & Educator



**Alvina Adimoelja**  
Scientist & Educator



**Michael Friend**  
Community Organizer



**Alison & Dale Batie**  
Secondary School Teachers

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

## FAITH & ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNITIES

Marnie's Interfaith America Fellowship supported several faith and science activities, including the fMuseum of Science event, podcast feature, and conference in Omaha.

Chicago, IL

### Interfaith America Fellowship & Summit

Marnie was accepted into the inaugural cohort of Interfaith America's Faith & Health Fellows.

Boston, MA

### Boston Museum of Science Film Screening & Forum

MoS screened "God, Science, & Our Search for Meaning", followed by a discussion led by Rob & Marnie.

Omaha, NE

### Genetics & Spirituality Conference

"Genetics and Spirituality: Conversations at the Nexus of Science and Faith"

Omaha, NE

### Science & Spirituality Institute Podcast

Marnie was a guest on Ep. 2: *Reflections on the 'Genetics & Spirituality Conference'*.

Virtual

### Social Impact Entertainment Society Science & Story Panel

Showrunner Scott Z. Burns & geneticist George Church discussed the science and ethics of de-extinction.

Los Angeles, CA

### Social Impact Entertainment Society Annual Conference

Robin & Gill's pitch for a dramatic series was one of two selected to workshop with screenwriters.

Virtual

### Social Impact Entertainment Society Storyteller Guides

We co-created two guidebooks to support storytellers in crafting future-facing storylines about genetics.

# OUR FIRST TABLETOP GAME

## Share Your Stance on Personal Genetics: A Conversation-Sparking Tabletop Game



In 2024, we created our first interactive game: Share Your Stance on Personal Genetics (SYS): A Conversation-Sparking Tabletop Game. SYS was designed to be a catalyst for thought-provoking discussions that explore the complex relationship between genetics and society.

The core concept of SYS is simple yet powerful: players engage in dynamic conversations with groups of three or more as they reflect on a wide range of topics with no clear-cut right or wrong answers.

### The game is organized around five central categories:

Agriculture



Privacy



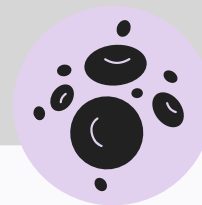
Environment



Ancestry



Human Health



These topics cover pressing issues in genetics and society, each offering opportunities to challenge assumptions, share personal beliefs, and consider the ethical and societal implications of genetic technologies.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:  
STUDENTS IN CLASSROOMS & STEAM EXPOS



Boston, MA

**Boston Day & Evening Academy**

Marnie & Ting visited BDEA students for their "The Story in Our Genes" class during Project Month.

Boston, MA

**Talking Genetics with Middle School Students**

Nadine explored the science of genome editing & the ethical implications of this technology.



Storrs, CT

**Inspiring Allied Health Undergraduate Students**

Gill shared about the importance of public engagement in science with UConn students.

Boston, MA

**Civic Biology at Tufts University**

Marnie presented PGED stories from the field to biology undergraduate students.

Germantown, MD

**BioTech STEM Expo at Roberto Clemente Middle School**

Rob shared our gene editing booth kit & had lively conversations about genetics applications with students.



Los Angeles, CA

**Annual Girl STEM Conference at Lynwood Unified Schools**

Helen presented about "Genetics, Health, & Society" to 400+ girls in elementary school.

Baltimore, MD

**STEM Expo at Morgan State University**

Rob spoke with students & parents from MD, PA, & DE about genetics research & its applications.

Gaithersburg, MD

**BioTech Health Expo at Montgomery Village School**

Rob shared our gene editing booth kit & engaged with students about genetic applications.

### ● Exploring Public Engagement & Culture Change (NSF #2334984)

"[Culture Change—Building a Relational and Inclusive Discipline through Genetics Engagement \(CC-BRIDGE\)](#)" is a capacity-building initiative to explore public engagement as a path for transformative culture change in genetics grounded in healthy relationships within the field and between science and society. This project was launched in April 2024 in partnership with the Genetics Society of America and the Reclaiming STEM Institute.



### ● Bridging Conversation & Action (NSF #2427533)

PGED is thrilled to be one of the [inaugural awardees of the Responsible Design, Development, and Deployment of Technologies program](#), launched by the NSF in collaboration with philanthropic partners including the Ford Foundation, the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation, and Siegel Family Endowment. In collaboration with social impact designer, Holly Truitt, we seek to pilot a new "impact accelerator" model for cultivating ethical and equitable genetics innovation. This program draws on the expertise of participants from diverse professional sectors and communities to co-design next-step solutions towards pressing challenges.



### ● Expanding Our Curricula & Reach

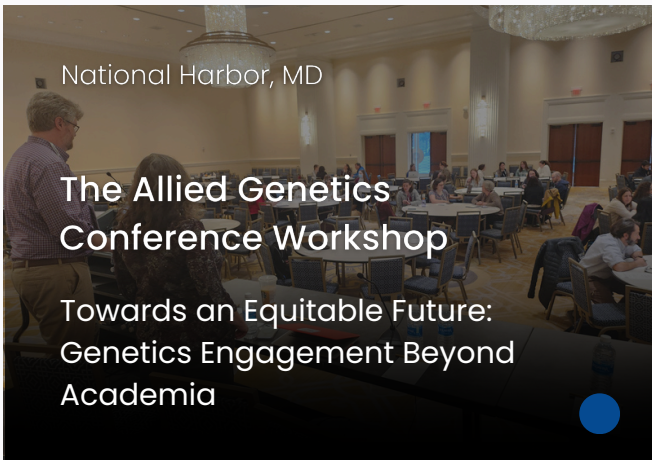
We are excited to launch a new collaboration with [HHMI BioInteractive](#), an education program that reaches tens of thousands of high school and undergraduate life science classrooms, to infuse exploration of social issues into biology curricula, using Sickle Cell Disease as a case study.



## GROWING PARTNERSHIPS

This year, we launched 2 collaborative projects with awards from the National Science Foundation (NSF). We also established a partnership with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) to create curricular resources.

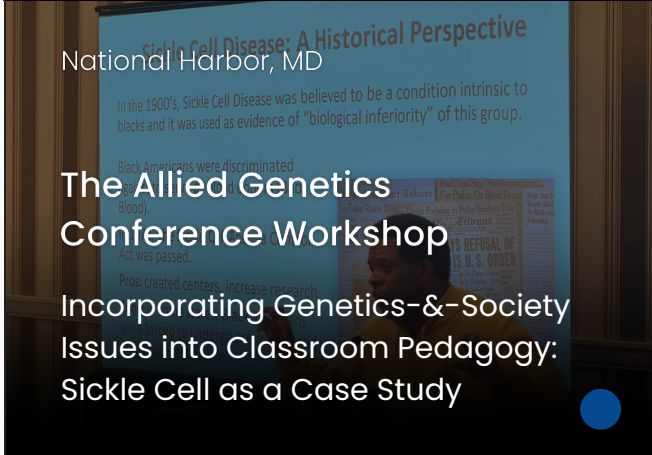
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:  
PROFESSIONAL SCIENCE COMMUNITIES



National Harbor, MD

### The Allied Genetics Conference Workshop

Towards an Equitable Future: Genetics Engagement Beyond Academia



National Harbor, MD

### The Allied Genetics Conference Workshop

Incorporating Genetics-&- Society Issues into Classroom Pedagogy: Sickle Cell as a Case Study



National Harbor, MD

### The Allied Genetics Conference Workshop

Building an Inclusive Genetics Future & Communicating Science



Virtual

### American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Rob hosted a webinar, Towards A Publicly Engaged Biological Anthropology".



Los Angeles, CA

### American Association of Biological Anthropologists

Rob organized an "Art, Culture, & Science Communication" Expo & presented on PGED resources.





# THANK YOU

We are grateful for the unwavering support of our partners, collaborators, and members of our community.

In the next year, we will boost our impact by sharing resources on our new website, producing new learning and engagement activities, and training leaders and learners in science and education.

To stay updated on our activities and collaboration opportunities, be sure to join our mailing list!

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