Science Coaches 2020–2021
May 6, 2020
1. **What is Science Coaches?**
   a. What are the benefits and requirements?
   b. Who can participate?
   c. How do I get a partner?
   d. What does a coach do?
   e. What’s new this year?
   f. What do participants say about it?

2. **Keys to an effective partnership**

3. **How to apply**

4. **Contact**
What is Science Coaches?

An educational outreach initiative dedicated to enhancing science skills in K–12 students.

The program partners coaches (volunteer chemists) with AACT teacher members in elementary, middle, and high schools to collaborate throughout the school year.
Benefits

• Build a valuable relationship between chemistry educators and chemistry professionals
• Encourage student interest in chemistry
• $550 Flinn Scientific gift certificate* or $500 check from ACS to enhance your classroom
• Flexibility to work on whatever projects you want
Requirements

• Six (6) face-to-face meetings throughout the school year
• Teachers must be AACT members*
• One teacher per coach, one coach per teacher
• Coach and teacher may not share finances and must be in the US
Who can participate?

**Teachers**
- K-5 teachers of science
- 6-8 teachers of physical science
- 9-12 teachers of chemistry
- Must be an AACT member

**Coaches**
- Chemistry professionals
- Chemistry professors
- Chemistry graduate students/post-docs
- Retired or semi-retired professionals
- Former/retired K–12 chemistry teachers

*No undergraduate students or current K–12 teachers as coaches*
Finding a Partner

• Apply together with a partner you have already found
  - Make sure you both apply with each other’s info
  - Try to find someone you connect with at a nearby university, company, or ACS local section

• Apply as an individual and we will try to match you
  - Based on geographic proximity and application responses
What Does a Coach Do?

A science coach supports a K–12 classroom teacher by:

• Conducting demos, experiments, lessons
• Organizing or cleaning stockrooms
• Incorporating NGSS and inquiry activities into lessons and presentations
• Answering content questions
• Presenting about their job or field of study
• Mentoring student research projects
• Giving virtual tours of their lab
• And more!
Program Updates

• A couple of changes for this year’s application:
  – AACT will provide a limited number of complimentary AACT memberships for teachers working in high-needs schools
  – We strongly encourage people to select the $550 Flinn Scientific gift certificate rather than the $500 check— you get an extra $50 and you get access to the funds sooner! Only a limited number of checks will be issued this year.
What do participants say?

99% of both teachers and coaches would recommend the program to a colleague.

96% of coaches and 95% of teachers rated satisfaction as 4 or 5 out of 5.

What coaches did to support their teacher partners:

- Helped plan lessons, demos, experiments: 69%
- Answered content questions: 64%
- Served as a science role model: 63%
- Served as a guest speaker: 49%
One of the toughest things about teaching at the high school level is having someone with a deep content knowledge to bounce ideas off of. These conversations deepen my understanding, enable me to clarify explanations to students, and perhaps most importantly, make me feel connected to the chemical community.

When my AP Chemistry students on the tour of Eli Lilly saw the $K_a$ listed for various drugs they said "Wow! It's really used!". We had talked about how $K_a$ is used in class, but to actually see it on screen at Eli Lilly was so much more meaningful.

It was by far the most valuable professional development I have ever had. One student who was not very engaged in our course LOVED the experience of getting to ask questions to a real chemist so much so that he asked me if he could sit in my class a second time to help the chemist and his friends learn about the lab techniques.

My coach was integral in increasing my understanding of the subject matter of chemistry, and assisted me in unpacking the new NGSS and planning instructional content relevant to those standards as a means of facilitating both student engagement and student learning.
Testimonials from Coaches

I think the latitude we currently have really makes the program go. Being able to plan demos and activities around what works for each teacher/scientist pair is really important to what works for me personally and I think at large as well.

I have loved when students come up with observations or comments about the material that I hadn't even been considering. It continues to show the benefit of being a community of learners—the Science Coach included! I learn every time I'm there with the students.

It is very instructive for me as a college instructor to get a glimpse of what high school chem is like...it's been a LONG time since I was a high school teacher myself...and it is so easy to make assumptions about my college students that may or may not resemble reality!!!

I recently had contact with a student who saw one of my eighth grade demonstrations. He had recently graduated from college and credited seeing my performance as one of the reasons he majored in Chemistry.

When the parents of the students tell you their child comes home talking about you and how much the student appreciates you, it doesn't get any better than that.
Keys to Effective Partnerships

• Meet as soon as possible to set goals for the year
• Get to know your partner
• Maintain open and frequent communication
• Be flexible and open to new ideas
How to Apply

• Please visit teachchemistry.org/sciencecoaches
• Applications close September 1
• We will notify all applicants by October 1
Contact

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