

ANIMAL ACTION

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CHANGING CLASSROOMS, CHANGING LIVES.

Bringing Innovation
and Compassion to
our Classrooms

in this issue

Teacher Success Stories, the Future of Humane Science Education,
Important Education Legislation, and More!

The National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS) is dedicated to ending the exploitation of animals used in science.

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Humane Science Education:

An Investment for the Future

What we learn in school affects us for the rest of our lives. New knowledge and understanding can alter how we — most importantly our children — perceive the world around us and cause a ripple effect on ourselves and others.

For decades, schools across the country taught life science and biology using dissection of a dead animal as a key tool. Children accept the fact that cutting open dead animals is a necessary step in learning science and implicitly learning the ethics of science research.

As those children grow and continue their schooling, they never think twice about whether animal dissection is necessary or ethical. They've learned that using animals is the only way to do research and testing. After all, it must be both necessary and ethical if it is a requirement.

At NAVS, we recognize that demonstrating and providing a humane method of education is not only important in saving animal lives, but it also affirms the highest ethical calling of the science community. This is so for two reasons. One, the science community has long accepted the 3Rs principles of ethics in animal use. The highest ethical calling of a scientist is to replace the use of an animal in an instance where a non-animal subject would do just as well. Two, research proves that the Humane dissection models cataloged in BioLeap are as good or better than animal dissection.

Through these humane education initiatives, which include materials to help teachers introduce and explore the 3Rs, including the importance of animal replacement in research and resources to help them replace traditional dissection, our goal is to provide students with an ethical compass and the means to learn that good science can occur without the use of animals. While many of us grew up learning that using animals is an unquestioned part of the process, we want to change that for the students of today who are the scientists of the future. By pointing administrators, teachers, and students to new means of learning we can open up a myriad of opportunities for young minds to learn and explore the field of biology without the necessity of harming animals.

BioLEAP appeals to administrators, teachers, and students who want to improve their classrooms and learning experiences. At a fraction of the financial cost and none of the animal cost, administrators can balance their budgets by choosing physical or virtual models over animal specimens for dissection exercises. Teachers can enhance their classrooms with innovative tools and materials that highlight novel approaches to conducting research and testing. We also provide resources to students who want to exercise their right to choose humane alternatives to traditional dissection. As of this writing, 21 states have passed a form of student choice laws that afford students the ability to opt out of dissection and choose a humane alternative.

It is crucial that we continue to spread the word about the benefits of humane teaching models. Our base of teachers and administrators continues to grow exponentially. We are determined to show students, teachers, and administrators that there is a better way of doing things.

With your continued support, we will ensure that no one needs to take the life of an innocent animal to learn about the life sciences. Indeed, our approach puts the "life" in life sciences.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Kandaras, J.D.
Executive Director

BioLEAP's Remarkable Growth

Classrooms Everywhere
Are Learning About
Humane Science



As the program manager for BioLEAP, I am thrilled about the tremendous growth we have experienced over the past two years in both our program offerings and our engagement with educators. Our mission to promote humane science education is reaching more classrooms and affecting more students than ever before.

One of the most exciting aspects of our growth is the sheer increase in applications we've received for BioLEAP Classroom Grants. Since our inaugural grant cycle in 2021, we have seen an **increase of almost 400% in applications** from educators eager to incorporate humane science practices into their curriculum. This surge in interest reflects a growing awareness among educators that animal dissection is no longer the only way to teach

anatomy in the classroom, and that more ethical solutions are a better choice.

Our funding efforts have also expanded significantly. Since 2022, we have distributed **\$17,540** in grants, allowing us to support **19** teachers in schools across the country. Thanks to the success of our program and the generous support of our donors, we've increased grant funding for the 2024-2025 cycle to \$15,000 and plan to support 21 additional teachers in their quest to replace and reduce animal dissection in the classroom.

The real impact of our work, however, is best seen in the number of students we are reaching. In the past two years, BioLEAP has directly impacted the education of **more than 800** students. Each of these students now has the opportunity to experience anatomy labs

without having to sacrifice animal lives. Thanks to BioLEAP, these students are learning in an environment shaped by compassion and ethics, principles that will guide their futures as both scientists and responsible citizens.

Working closely with teachers and administrators, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative effect of our program. Teachers are not only integrating humane science into their lessons, but they are also becoming advocates for this approach within their schools and communities. The feedback we receive is overwhelmingly positive, with educators expressing their gratitude and enthusiasm for teaching scientific concepts without harming animals.

For example, one teacher that received a classroom grant in 2023-24 said, "As an advocate for animal rights and humane

treatment of ALL animals, I fully support teaching students the humane way."

As we look to the future, I am filled with optimism. The momentum we have gained in the past few years is just the beginning. With continued support and dedication, we will keep expanding our reach, funding more classrooms, and introducing more students to innovative and humane approaches for scientific research and exploration. Together, we are building a future where humane science education is the norm, not the exception.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Your support and belief in our mission are what make this growth possible.

Anna Madsen
Program Manager



The Future of BioLEAP: A Roadmap

As we look to the future, NAVS is more committed than ever to advancing humane science education. Our strategic vision for the coming years is built on innovation, accessibility, and ethical practices, ensuring we continue to empower educators and inspire students nationwide. Here's a glimpse into the exciting initiatives we have planned.



Creation of a New, Engaging Website

The first item on our action plan is the re-design of BioLEAP.org. By the end of 2024, we will create a sleek new home for BioLEAP resources, specifically designed to appeal to teachers and school administrators. This modern digital hub will consolidate our humane education resources, making it easy for teachers to access our 3Rs curriculum, product catalog, and classroom grant application. Administrators will find valuable information on the benefits of humane science education to reduce annual costs and create a learning environment that's inclusive for all students. Additionally, the site will offer downloadable materials, video tutorials, and case studies showcasing successful humane education practices, making it a go-to resource for educators interested in compassionate science education.

Emphasizing the 3Rs Curriculum and the Replacement of Animals in Research and Testing

The 3Rs, Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement, are guiding principles for the use of animals in research and testing. Although widely taught in Europe, the 3Rs principle is not yet a common topic covered in the U.S. classroom—but we plan to change that! Our 3Rs material makes it easy for teachers to integrate important conversations about animal ethics and advancements in humane science into their lessons. All eight of our full lesson plans and interactive modules will be available to download for free on the BioLEAP website.

Development of a Teacher Advisory Board

To ensure our offerings remain relevant and effective, we are establishing a Teacher Advisory Board to help guide the growth of BioLEAP programming. This diverse group of experienced educators will provide valuable feedback on our programs and resources, helping us to continuously improve. The board will play a crucial role in many of the projects we have planned for the upcoming year, including the publication of a paper supporting humane education methods, implementation of our 3Rs curriculum in classrooms, and development of a workshop we can present at teacher conferences. Through regular meetings and ongoing collaboration, the advisory board will help us stay attuned to trends, challenges, and opportunities in humane science education.

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Expanding Classroom Grants

We are thrilled to announce plans to expand our classroom grants program, enabling us to support even more educators in their purchase of humane learning tools to replace dissection. By securing additional funding, we aim to increase the number of grants awarded each year. We are also simplifying the application process by creating a grant portal on the new and improved BioLEAP.org to encourage wider participation. Special attention will be given to schools in underserved and rural areas, ensuring that all students have access to humane education resources. By tracking and sharing the impact of these grants, we hope to demonstrate their value and inspire further involvement from educators and supporters alike.

Engaging More Directly with Administrators and Superintendents

Building strong relationships with school leadership is key to supporting humane science education at an institutional level. We are developing targeted outreach programs to administrators and superintendents that highlight the cost-effectiveness and educational benefits of humane alternatives to traditional dissection. We hope that by informing high level administrators about the value of humane education, we can start to see change enacted at the school or even district level, rather than classroom by classroom.

More Focused Outreach for Districts, Especially in Rural Areas

Ensuring that humane science education resources are accessible to all students, regardless of location, is a top priority. This year, we are focusing on classroom grant outreach efforts to schools in rural districts. These schools often lack funding for technology and lab materials, putting rural students at a disadvantage compared to their peers in better funded districts. Additionally, children from rural backgrounds often grow up in communities strongly influenced by farming and hunting culture, so for many of them, an animal-free dissection experience might be the first time they are introduced to the concept of valuing animal life beyond its usefulness to humans. Feedback from rural educators will be crucial in helping us continuously improve and adapt our outreach strategies to meet their needs and help spread humane education to every child in America.

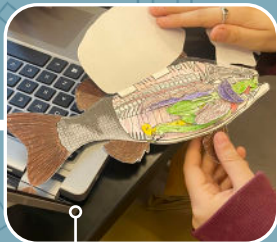
NAVS is dedicated to advancing humane science education by leveraging technology, fostering collaboration, and ensuring equitable access to resources. Through these strategic initiatives, we aim to create a future where compassionate, innovative science education is the standard in classrooms across the country. Together with educators, administrators, and our community of supporters, we will continue to make significant strides in promoting ethical and effective science education.



THANK YOU

Because of your continued support of NAVS and BioLEAP, together we are shaping a brighter, more humane future for science education.

Teacher Success Stories: Humane Education in Action

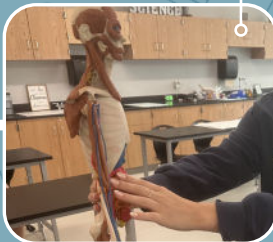
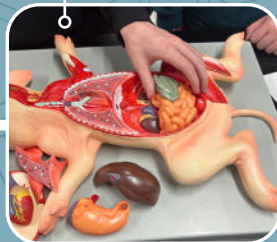


MARIA BEREZNAK - J. Sterling Morton East High School, Cicero, IL
Humane Learning Tool: Dissection Paper Models Bundle from Getting Nerdy

"As an advocate for animal rights and humane treatment of ALL animals, I fully support teaching students the humane way. Students enjoyed having an actual model and finished product at the end of the dissection. I displayed the models around the room, and many teachers commented on how neat they were."

ASHLEY JOHNSON - Malvern High School, Malvern, AR
Humane Learning Tools: Paper Dissection Models from Getting Nerdy, Altay PVC Pig Model

"Students were really excited to see the pig models. They liked getting to take all of the structures out of the model and then trying to figure out how it all fit back together. This lesson really got the students asking questions about how the body works as a whole, leading to better classroom discussions than traditional dissections did. There was a 92% passing rate on a quiz identifying the organs/structures in the different organ systems."



STEPHANIE LEONHART - Green High School, Franklin Furnace, OH
Humane Learning Tool: MANIKEN Anatomy in Clay Models

"The students really enjoyed the Anatomy in Clay system. Usually, students get nervous by labs because of the dissection component, but I was able to avoid that. Both students and parents were thrilled that I incorporated the Anatomy in Clay systems rather than the dissections we would typically perform. My goals for student learning were exceeded."

JAYNE-SHAYE BAILEY - Clarksburg High School, Clarksburg, MD
Humane Learning Tool: Synfrog

"Students had a lot of fun during this lab and enjoyed the hands-on aspect. They liked seeing the different organs and relating them to anatomical structure. It is a very easy, realistic, and humane solution to use for dissection labs. There was no bad odor, and they were very easy to store and clean up. I was surprised at how realistic the frog was and how well the organs were placed."



ANNIE SPICKARD - Lincoln Avenue Academy, Lakeland, FL
Humane Learning Tool: Dissect-It Frog Lab

"The students were super excited to use the humane solution to frog dissection! In the past, some students have gotten sick or nearly passed out during dissection. This year, all of our students were able to access the lab without getting sick. Students commented on how happy they were to not have to work on a real dead animal. They were glad to not have to smell the terrible smell from the dead preserved animals."

BRIAN TENNALL - Clinton Senior High School, Clinton, MO
Humane Learning Tool: Origami Models

"The learning goals were met and surpassed. Students are allowed to keep their models, which I was able to measure a definite increase in participation and knowledge retention. I was shocked at how easy it was to replace animal models with paper models and technology, with students learning the same, if not more, from their own personal models. No cleanup, no waste of life, and students keep their own models to study from home. It's a win-win."



Expanding Our Reach: Engaging with Educators In-Person

As part of our mission to raise awareness with teachers and administrators about humane education, NAVS has been actively participating in local and national conferences to promote the ethical, financial, environmental, and educational benefits of using humane methods in the classroom. Over the past year, our presence at these events has helped us connect with educators, share our resources, and advocate for humane science education on a larger scale.



ISEF: International Science and Engineering Fair

This past spring, we attended Education Outreach Day at the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), one of the largest pre-college science competitions in the world. Our booth was bustling with activity as more than 3,200 students and teachers from the Los Angeles area stopped by to learn about our humane science education initiatives. We displayed some of the latest developments in humane dissection technology, including a hyper-realistic synthetic frog and a digital fetal pig. The enthusiastic response we received from students as they explored the models was incredibly encouraging and demonstrated a strong interest in humane science education among the next generation of scientists and their mentors. Thanks to California state CHOICE laws, all of the students who visited our table on Education Outreach Day have the right to opt out of dissection, and we hope that our demonstrations reminded them that they can speak up for what they believe is right and still receive an excellent education in science.

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NSTA: National Science Teaching Association

NAVS also had a significant presence at the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) conference earlier this year. This event provided an invaluable platform to engage directly with science educators from across the country. At our booth, we showcased our BioLEAP resources, including humane learning tools that teachers can purchase through our grant and samples of our high school level 3Rs curriculum. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many teachers we met applying for our classroom grants for the 2024-25 school year and incorporating humane resources into their classrooms.

Looking ahead, we are preparing to attend up to three more teacher conferences slated for the fall. These upcoming events present further opportunities to connect with teachers and expand our network of advocates for humane science.

Impact and Future Directions

Although the digital era has greatly expanded our ability to reach a wide audience with our messaging, nothing compares to the power of meeting educators and students face to face at conferences. In-person engagement is our secret to effectively promoting the benefits of humane science education and demonstrating the wide range of humane learning tools available to replace dissection. The connections made and the knowledge shared at these events are instrumental in driving the adoption of humane practices in education.

Through our ongoing participation in ISEF, NSTA, and other conferences, we are building a community of educators who are committed to compassionate, ethical science education. We look forward to continuing this important work and seeing the positive impact of our efforts in classrooms across the country.



Empowering Classrooms with Humane Science Education

Recognizing Outstanding Educators

Our grants are awarded to educators who demonstrate a commitment to humane science education and the ethical treatment of animals. These teachers are transforming their classrooms with innovative, humane alternatives to traditional animal dissection and experimentation. Their dedication to fostering a compassionate approach to science education inspires us all.

Celebrating Our 2024-25 Grant Recipients

We are thrilled to announce the recipients of the BioLEAP Classroom Grants for the 2024-25 academic year. This year, our program has reached new heights, supporting innovative and compassionate science education in more classrooms across the country than ever before.



2024-2025 Grant Recipients

ALABAMA

Ramona G. Brewer, Oneonta Elementary School, Oneonta

ARIZONA

Mindi Wright, Gila Ridge High School, Yuma

CONNECTICUT

Navita Choudhary, Global Experience Magnet School, Bloomfield
Brian O'Neill, Holy Trinity Catholic Academy, Shelton

FLORIDA

Kenneth Ward, Stranahan High School, Fort Lauderdale
Monique Mitchell, Dillard High, Fort Lauderdale
Brian Boswell, Cypress Bay High School, Weston
Jay Stobinsky, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Parkland
Derlyne J. Thomas, Deerfield Beach High School, Deerfield Beach
Susana Leon, South Broward High School, Hollywood
Teresa Wooley, Hollywood Hills High School, Hollywood
Christina Morales, Western High School, Davie
Lariell Faris, Henry D. Perry Education Center, Miramar

IOWA

Gregory Barord, Central Campus, Des Moines

ILLINOIS

Melissa Ramirez, Virgil I Grissom, Chicago

KENTUCKY

Kelly Scott, Pikeville High School, Pikeville

MICHIGAN

Becky Lipchik, Alanson Public Schools, Alanson

NEW JERSEY

Michelle Chalow, Vineland High School North -Tanner Building, Vineland

NEW YORK

Nahla Ward, International Leadership Charter Middle School, Bronx

TEXAS

Abby DeShazo, Coronado High School, Lubbock ISD, Lubbock
Velmarie Osorio, Harmony School of Innovation, Brownsville

Advocacy Efforts:

Shaping the Future of Science Education

At NAVS, we are dedicated to advocating for humane science education and ensuring that ethical practices become the norm in classrooms across the United States. Here's a look at some key policy initiatives that could significantly impact how science is taught in schools.



WHY THIS MATTERS

CLASS Act in California (AB 2640)

The CLASS Act represents a pivotal step forward in promoting transparency and ethical practices in science education. Here are some key points about the bill:

- **Transparency Requirement:** The bill mandates that teachers provide students, upon request, with any sourcing information provided by the vendor of the animals used for dissection, as well as details about the chemicals used to preserve the specimens.
- **Legislative Progress:** As of this writing, the bill has successfully passed the Assembly and is currently under consideration in the Senate.
- **Impact:** This bill has sparked crucial conversations about the practice of dissection in California, raising awareness about and further exploration of humane alternatives.

Anti-Vivisection Bill in New York (A 465)

New York is considering a groundbreaking bill that could end the use of live animals in medical training where alternative methods exist. Key points include:

- **Prohibition of Vivisection:** The bill seeks to prohibit vivisection at colleges, universities, professional, proprietary, or graduate schools when scientifically satisfactory alternatives are available.
- **Objective:** The primary aim is to eliminate the use of live animals in medical training.
- **Current Status:** Proponents of the bill have not shared details about its status.

Prohibiting Animal Hatching Projects in NY Schools (A 104)

Another recurring legislative effort in New York seeks to end animal hatching projects in schools. Here's what you need to know:

- **Bill Overview:** This bill would prohibit school districts, principals, administrators, or teachers from requiring, permitting, or conducting lessons or experimental studies involving animal hatching projects.
- **Practice in Question:** Some schools currently engage in hatching chicken or duck eggs in the classroom as part of their curriculum. This bill aims to put an end to such practices.
- **Legislative History:** This bill has been introduced many times before but has not progressed significantly.

These legislative efforts highlight the ongoing push toward more ethical and humane science education practices. By staying informed and supporting these initiatives, we can work together to ensure that compassion and ethical considerations become integral parts of science education. Your support helps us advocate for these changes and create a better, more humane future for students and animals alike.

Be sure to stay tuned to our Advocacy Center on navs.org for more information on how you can get involved and support these crucial legislative efforts. Together, we can make a difference in the world of science education.

Student Perspective:

How Humane Science Can Change a Student's Life

The following is an interview with Keerthana Rajesh, a high school student in Bangalore, India, who won a NAVS Humane Science Award at the 2024 International Science and Engineering Fair. Her project focused on the oral side effects of radiation treatment and wound healing properties of a natural treatment in a cell-based model. NAVS reached out to Keerthana to learn more about her education in India and what we can learn from a culture that emphasizes humane science education. We are inspired by her success and commitment to using human-relevant alternatives to animals.

The following interview has been lightly edited for length and clarity.



Q: Describe your educational experience in science – what did teachers and schools emphasize to help you become a better science student?

A: The biggest takeaways I have from learning science in the classroom include inquiry, collaboration, and open mindedness. My teachers always encouraged reading outside the classroom, which made me interested in consuming scientific articles, literature, and media. Moreover, we have a sense of community and teamwork within the classroom especially during project and experimental work. Finally, we tend to discuss a lot of perspectives and diverging ideas within science and express our opinions while also respecting others’.

Q: How did your education in science influence your work on the project you presented at ISEF?

A: What impacted me most in my education was a sense of purpose towards meaningful work. To me this meant focusing on cancer side effects, which aren’t given much importance within mainstream medical discourse and are overshadowed by other more “popular” conditions. I recognized a high incidence of oral mucositis within the Indian patient community and the limited treatment options that are inaccessible to most, and I wanted to solve that. Because I could see this firsthand at a cancer hospital, I felt very driven by my empathy and curiosity, which are also values greatly instilled in me through my education.

Q: In the US, animal dissection is commonly used to teach anatomy and physiology. How do students in India learn this topic since there is a ban on animal dissection in your country?

A: In 2011, a partial ban was imposed in India, allowing only teacher demonstrations in high school and dissections of unprotected species at the graduate level. Now, dissection is completely banned in high schools and extended to colleges, including medical and veterinary disciplines, allowing only cadaver dissections at specific times.

answer continued on next page

A: In high school, we rely mainly on theory. In grades 9 and 10, we learned human physiology through scientific illustrations and simulations. Testing emphasized visualizations and accurately drawing organs to understand spatial arrangement, like showing proportion in the thickness of membranes and the size of valves and vessels. We also studied the location, structure, and function of organs and tissues, including their appearance and specific adaptations for functions.

Currently, I'm studying in the International Baccalaureate diploma program, which has ethical guidelines prohibiting any harm to animals. We have preserved human organs, a life-sized skeleton model, and some taxidermy specimens in the school lab. However, some argue that tech-based alternatives are not sustainable for India's diverse population, as they aren't cost-effective or accessible enough in underdeveloped areas.

Q: What can be done to help students pursue their passions and learn more about learning and doing research without harming animals?

A: Many students, even in my country, see animal dissections and testing as necessary or even fascinating. There's also a belief that animal testing is essential for the "greater good" due to historical precedence and the lack of popularized alternative research methods. Changing this mindset is key.

While in-vitro biology allowed me to perform detailed analysis within cellular interactions and gene expressions, it's hard to eliminate the use of animals like mice for drug testing without ethical, accessible, cost-effective, and efficient alternatives. Extensive research and resources are needed for this.

At the high school level, I haven't been adversely affected by the lack of animal dissection. In student research, more restrictions should be imposed on using animals. Alternatives like molecular, cellular, and plant biology, or in-silico models, can be promoted to encourage rigorous yet ethical research.

Join NAVS' Monthly Sustainer Community and Change the World for Animals in Research



Many of the challenges that the National Anti-Vivisection Society is working to address require ongoing support to achieve long-term solutions. By joining our Circle of Compassion, you will sustain the initiatives that ultimately lead to lasting change.

The Value of Your Membership

Monthly giving ensures that your support goes further faster. By spreading your donation out over the year, you make it possible for NAVS to plan ahead and allocate resources effectively. Each and every monthly gift matters. Collectively, they add up to fuel the growth of our mission, accelerating smarter science and a kinder world.

\$15

ENABLES US TO PARTNER WITH SANCTUARIES, ENSURING FORMER RESEARCH ANIMALS RECEIVE HEALING CARE

\$25

HELPS PROVIDE CLASSROOMS WITH HUMANE EDUCATION TOOLS AND DISSECTION ALTERNATIVES

\$50

STRENGTHENS OUR EFFORTS TO ADVANCE LEGISLATION THAT WILL REDUCE AND ELIMINATE ANIMAL TESTING FOR GOOD

\$100

DRIVES LEADING-EDGE RESEARCH INTO ETHICAL TESTING METHODS THAT SAVE THE LIVES OF ANIMALS AND PEOPLE ALIKE

Member Benefits

As our way of saying "Thank You" for the lifesaving work your support makes possible, Circle of Compassion members receive special benefits, including:

- An annual subscription to our newsletter, Animal Action
- Dedicated email updates highlighting our most recent program developments
- Special invitations to virtual events offering a behind-the-scenes look into our work
- A sense of belonging in a national community of likeminded peers
- The joy of knowing you are making a difference in the lives of animals every day

Convenience and Flexibility

After you've set up your automatic monthly donation on the NAVS website at www.navs.org/circle, you can rest assured knowing that you are doing good day in and out with no interruption. If your circumstances change, you can easily modify or cancel your subscription at any time through your personal donor portal.



Thank you for your interest in becoming part of our efforts to forge a brighter future for all beings. Your compassion inspires us and moves our mission forward each and every day.



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Thank you for being in the fight with us and for your ongoing support.*

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