The French-American Science Festival was held for the eighth time during the sixth annual French American Innovation Midwest (FAIM) in Chicago. The FAIM is an annual series of events organized by the Consulate General of France in Chicago and its partners (the French-American Chamber of Commerce, the Alliance Française, etc.).

The Office for Science and Technology was involved in this event through the organization of the French-American Science Festival, first launch in 2011. This event aims at making science accessible to a broad audience and at promoting French-American scientific excellence. It is organized in partnership with the University of Chicago, the Council for Science and Technology (C2ST) and the Alliance Française of Chicago. Over the past eight years, this event has gained visibility and a wider scope as part of the FAIM.

During this event, two different kinds of events were presented:
- A full-day of workshops, experiments and exhibits dedicated to schoolchildren from Chicago
- One public lecture on a key scientific subject

On Tuesday, April 9th, 2019 the Office for Science and Technology (Chicago section) hosted the 8th Annual French-American Science Festival in Ida Noyes Hall on the University of Chicago's campus. 30 renowned French and American institutions participated in this unique event: Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, Notre Dame University, University of Wisconsin, Kansas University, the Shedd Aquarium, the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research center, Fermilab among many others.

Over 250 students from public and private schools across the Chicago area attended, so they could observe “hands-on” scientific demonstrations on a wide variety of subjects such as sustainable energy, biology, nanotechnology, astronomy, mathematics, paleontology and robotics. Hands-on booths - 13 booths were managed by 30 hands-on scientists:

- **Biology**: Sue Fox and Renée Brielmann, from Northwestern University, worked with students to visualize DNA and the tiny world of cells;
- **Aquatic ecosystems**: Mari Oates and Chelsea Pfeifer, from the Shedd Aquarium presented scientific tools
to examine the aquatic world.
- **Biochemistry**: Camille Henry, François Alberge and Allison Bender from the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center made a presentation on bacteria.
- **Plant biology**: Caroline Oldstone-Moore, Hannah Whitehurst and Amélie Vergnol of the University of Chicago presented a mini-zoo of insects that interact with plants.
- **Particle physics**: Christophe Royon, Cole Lindsey, Tommaso Isidori, Pierce Giffin from Kansas City University, presented interactive experiments showing basic principles in physics and displayed a film about the Large Hadron Collider at Cern.
- **Species conservation**: Alesandria Suchy Mabrouk from the Peggy Noteboeart Museum presented butterfly specimens from the Museum’s collections.
- **Ecology**: Anna Schlecht from the Peggy Noteboeart Museum taught regional ecology.
- **Zoology**: Corinne Palmer and Tess Stahler from the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, presented live animals of different species to the students, as well as the supports of their studies.
- **Aquatic biology**: Mark Bitter from the University of Chicago explained how marine species were affected by climate change.
- **Ecosystem pollination**: Leah Namoune, from the Office for Science and Technology at the French Embassy, explained the role of honey bees and had honey tasting.
- **Physics**: Tom Zirkle and Matt Filmer from the University of Notre Dame, presented the Coulomb Blockade and popped balloons to visualize what cold means.
- **Particle Physics**: Susan Dahl, Vincent Marc Basque, Anne Heavy and Reddy Pratap Gandeajula from the Fermilab showed tools that permit to make discoveries about particles of matter.
- **Astrophysics**: John Farmer and Harry Ni from the University of Chicago explained the role of cosmic ray detectors.

The festival also included one scientific conference, where a French keynote speaker covered the topic of the discovery of new particles that can explain the nature of dark matter, with a focus on the Large Hadron Collider, the largest particle accelerator located on the French-Swiss border.

The leading French scientist involved was Pr Christophe Royon, from Kansas University. He joined the University as a Foundation Distinguished Professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy in January.
2016. He won the Humboldt Research Award, the highest scientific award given by the German government in 2018. The lecture was held at the Alliance Française, in English, and open to all members of the public.

This eighth edition of the French American Science Festival was a success thanks to the pool of talented innovators and high-level researchers. This event also highlighted the dynamism of French-American collaborations on these topics.

For more information on :
- The French American science festival : https://sciencefest.france-science.org/
- The French American Innovation Midwest event : https://www.faimidwest.com/