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## Reaching out while remaining isolated: how Lakehead Orillia increased its science outreach during the pandemic.

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Changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have challenged educators at all levels. While the University experience has not been ideal, our classes benefited from platforms like Zoom already being in place and virtual labs already having been available to us. Elementary and secondary school students have had to overcome much more uncertainty and more severe obstacles. The need for outreach opportunities that extend the science classroom experience has never been greater, but science outreach has also never been so difficult. Classes split between in-person and online learners, questions about the safety of students sharing equipment and restrictions to classroom access have all demanded that we change the way we carry out hands-on science outreach. In this presentation I will discuss the ways our small outreach site, Let's Talk Science - Lakehead Orillia, managed to grow in spite of the difficulties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. I will focus on the formation of partnerships that enabled equipment to get to individual students (both those learning from home and those in classrooms) and strategies we employed to connect more than 120 volunteers with thousands of students through more than 130 virtual classroom visits over the last year.

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