



Science & Engineering
Alliance, Inc.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Science & Engineering Alliance (SEA) to Celebrate Twenty Years of Creating Access and Opening Doors of Opportunity for Minorities

~Unique consortium of African-American leaders in science and engineering will host students for lab tour, panel discussion, presentation of awards and next round of scholarships ~

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 7, 2010—As the first national science festival descends on the nation's capital this month, the Science and Engineering Alliance (SEA) will celebrate two decades of helping students from underrepresented groups engage in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers. On October 15, SEA hosted a group of promising minority high school and college students, as they: toured laboratories at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), where they heard about research careers in the public sector; visited with attorneys and other professionals at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP and heard about careers for scientists in the private sector, particularly in the legal field; and attended a gala honoring scholarship recipients, leaders, and organizations that embody and support SEA's mission of creating access and opening doors of opportunity.

"All our efforts have the same goal—giving more young Americans the skills to succeed in college and in life," noted Dr. Bernard Harris, the first African-American to walk in space and a member of the Board of Directors at the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI), who attended the gala to receive an award on NMSI's behalf. "It is good to learn about an organization like NMSI that is also working to create access and open doors of opportunity for segments of our society that are grossly underrepresented in the STEM fields," said Dr. Robert Shepard, SEA's founding executive director.

Over the past 20 years, SEA has encouraged more than 9,000 students in its conferences, workshops and campus visits. Over 400 of these academically talented students in science and engineering have been awarded nearly \$400,000 in scholarships and academic incentive awards. More than 700 high school teachers have participated in SEA's summer enrichment program and have collectively impacted over 20,000 students.

"America's diversity has always been the key to its scientific prowess. It stands to reason then that if we can open up these fields to an even greater percentage of our populace, the greater our successes will be," added Tommy E. Smith of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL). "The SEA is doing much to facilitate this success, by encouraging greater numbers of underrepresented students to go into STEM fields, and by helping to enhance the overall quality and relevance of their educational experience."

Over 450 new small businesses, including disadvantaged and women-owned businesses, have benefited from SEA mentoring support. Over 600 faculty and students have participated in high-quality collaborative research working group meetings and projects in chemistry, physics, biotechnology and environmental science, designed to enhance the research infrastructure of the SEA institutions and support training of the future American technical workforce.

The *SEA Award of Distinction* is given each year to persons or groups who have provided valuable support or advocacy for the mission of the SEA program. The 2010 recipients are:

- *Dr. George Miller on behalf of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL)*—a founding associate member of the consortium, financial supporter and strong advocate for the SEA program throughout its 20-year history, whose continuous leadership is vital to the organization's mission.

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- *The National Math & Science Initiative (NMSI)*—in recognition of its efforts to strengthen the pipeline of underrepresented groups into STEM by helping to close the achievement gap, as evidenced by results indicating that the increase in the number of math, science, and English AP exams passed among African-American and Hispanic students at schools receiving NMSI grants over the past two years was more than eight times that of their national peers.
- *U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)*—presented to Ms. Annie Whatley, Associate Director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact, whose dedicated support and advocacy for the advancement of the SEA program has opened doors for so many talented young scientists.
- *Mrs. Halima Adasi, Founding Partner and Executive Vice President for Administration, Foisi Broadcasting Network Africa (FBN)*—the first employee hired at SEA, who spent 16 years serving as a right hand to the executive director, using impeccable financial and negotiation skills to help build a solid foundation for the organization.

This year, SEA presented scholarships to nearly 20 students, including:

- *Alisha Sledge, Alabama A&M University, Research on Assessment of Surface Water Quality of Huntsville Spring Branch and Indian Creek Watersheds*: Alisha is majoring in Environmental Science with a concentration in Environmental Health Science. She is the first generation college student who aspires to a career as an Environmental Inspector.
- *Na-Asia Ellis, Alabama A&M University, Research on Integrated Moisture Index Modeling Using GIS*: Na-Asia is a junior with a 3.38 GPA double majoring in civil engineering and environmental science. She aspires to be an environmental engineer.
- *Candace Crum, Buckhorn High School (Alabama), Research on Global Warming*: Upon graduation, Candace plans to attend Alabama A&M University and major in biology and math. She aspires to a career in the medical field, where she hopes to be known for achieving success in life while making a change in the world.
- *Sean Scott, Jackson State University, Research on Multimodal Biometrics*: Sean is a junior with a 3.3 GPA. He has interned in the Information Technology Division at NIST and plans on attending graduate school.
- *Jonathan Johnson, Provine High School (Mississippi), Research on Introduction to Robotics*: Jonathan is a senior and plans to attend Jackson State University. He currently has a 3.4 GPA and has performed research at The University of Iowa and at Brookhaven National Laboratory. His career goal is to become a Secondary Education Mathematics teacher.
- *Grant Pierre, Prairie View A&M University, Research on Role of Saccharomyces Cerevisiae Thiol Peroxidases in Hydrogen Peroxide Mediated Signaling and Oxidative Stress Defense*: Grant is a junior with a 3.4 GPA who participated numerous programs, which gave him an introduction to medical and dental school. He is a first generation college student, whose overall interest in science and knowledge led him to pursue a degree in Biology. Motivated by personal experiences, he plans to become a physician.
- *Uchenna Nwafor, Prairie View A&M University, Research on Identification of a Potential Exo1 Independent Mismatch Repair Pathway*: Uchenna is a senior majoring in Biology with a 3.4 GPA. He strives to find beneficial opportunities both academically and personally. He believes that doing so will advance both his own progression in life, and ideally could be used as a stepping-stone in fostering the development of his peers.

- *Polite Stewart, Jr., Southern University, Research on Photoluminescence of Etched SiC Nanowires*: Polite is a junior majoring in Chemistry with a 3.3 GPA, who was home schooled by his parents. When he was ten years old, he began attending the Timbuktu Academy at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. At the age of fourteen, he entered Southern University. His career goal is to receive a Bachelor of Science degree from Southern University and pursue studies in the field of medicine.

The events on October 15, 2010 took place as follows:

- 8:30-11:15am Student Tour of Laboratories
National Institute of Standards & Technology
Gaithersburg, Maryland
- 1:30-3:30pm Panel Discussion on STEM Careers in the Private Sector and Legal Field
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
Washington, D.C.
- 6:00-10:00pm SEA 20th Anniversary Gala: Reception, Dinner and Awards
Marriott Gaithersburg Washingtonian Center
9751 Washingtonian Boulevard, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Journalists interested in speaking with leaders at the following organizations regarding the importance of encouraging minority students to engage in STEM careers may contact:

<p><i>Science & Engineering Alliance, Inc.</i> Robert Shepard, Ph.D, Executive Director c/o Frances Bravo, Director of Public & Media Relations at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP frances.bravo@morganlewis.com 215.963.5835</p>	<p><i>Alabama A&M University</i> Jerome Saintjones or Thomas Colvin III, Office of Information and Public Relations jerome.saintjones@aamu.edu or thomas.colvin@aamu.edu 256.372.5607 or 256.372.5655</p>
<p><i>Jackson State University</i> Tommiea J. King, Public Relations Manager tommiea.p.jackson@jsums.edu 601.979.2950</p>	<p><i>Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory</i> Jim Bono, Director of Public Affairs bono4@llnl.gov 925.422.9919</p>
<p><i>National Institute of Standards & Technology</i> Gail Porter, Director, Public & Business Affairs gail.porter@nist.gov 301.975.3392</p>	<p><i>National Math & Science Initiative</i> Rena Pederson, Communications Director rpederson@nationalmathandscience.org 214.665.2523</p>
<p><i>Prairie View A&M University</i> Shelea Hughes, Director of Public Relations sdhughes@pvamu.edu 936.261.2121</p>	<p><i>Southern University and A&M College</i> Edward Pratt, Office of Media Relations edward_pratt@subr.edu 225.771.4545</p>

About the Science & Engineering Alliance, Inc. (SEA)

SEA is a nonprofit consortium of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) aimed at creating opportunities, energizing teachers, encouraging and expanding the horizons of students and making connections with respect to participation by underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) research and education. The four founding member HBCUs are: Alabama A&M University (Huntsville, AL), Jackson State University (Jackson, MS), Prairie View A&M University (Prairie View, TX) and Southern University and A&M College (Baton Rouge, LA). The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) joined in 2002 as the second associate member of SEA.