

Spring 2009



5th National Research Symposium



Dr. Nelson Soto of the Graduate School at Indiana University receives his speakers recognition award from Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow Stephanie Hughes

Symposium Attendees:
225
Oral Presentations:
22
Poster Presentations:
83

The 5th Annual LSMAMP National Research Symposium was held on October 6th and 7th, 2008, at Jackson State University in the e-Center. Students and coordinators from the eight Mississippi sites, along with students and faculty from Fayetteville State University and Howard University, joined together for a day and a half of keynote speeches and presentations about opportu-

nities for graduate study and research internships at academic institutions and in industry. The Symposium Committee received ninety (105) abstracts this year and students gave oral and poster presentations of their research on both days.

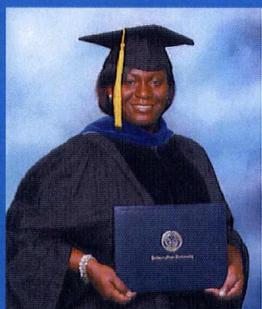
Keynote Speakers

The lead-off Keynote speaker was Dr. Robert Shepard, Executive Director of the Science and Engineering Alliance, who made a special effort to be at the symposium before attend-

ing his organization's conference the next day. Mr. Tommy Smith, Deputy Director for Strategic Initiatives and Diversity at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and Dr. Nelson Soto, Assistant Dean, IUPUI Graduate Office, shared the podium for luncheon addresses the first day and inspired the students with both their personal stories and with the opportunities for advance degrees in the STEM areas. Dr. Henry Frierson, Dean of

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Bridge to the Doctorate: Cohort One - First 4 Ph.D.'s



Tomekia Simeon



Charity Mosley



Eric McClendon



Brian Napolion

In the fall of 2003, the first Cohort of the Bridge to the Doctorate Program began their studies within the Louis Stokes Mississippi Alliance for Minority Participation at Jackson State University (JSU.) Of the ten (10) individuals who began the pro-

gram, four (4) have achieved their doctorate degrees and the other six (6) are well on their way to completing the requirements for the Ph.D. at their respective institutions.

Ph.D.'s Achieved

The first of the Cohort to earn her Ph.D. was Tomekia Simeon (pictured at left.) Dr. Simeon was awarded her degree in May of 2008 from JSU in the field of Computational Chemistry and is now working at Jackson State University. The next to attain her degree at JSU was Charity Mosley in

August of 2008 in the area of Forensic Chemistry. Dr. Mosley is working with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency in Dallas, Texas. In December of 2008, both Brian Napolion and Eric McClendon received their degrees in Organic Chemistry, also at JSU. Dr. Napolion is serving in a post-doctorate position in the Department of Physics, Atmospheric Sciences and Geoscience at JSU. Dr. McClendon is attending medical school at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

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Cohort One: 2003-2005

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Najealicka Armstrong will receive her PhD in 2010 in Molecular Biology from Howard University;



Kylie Nash, expects her PhD in Industrial Engineering from Mississippi State University to be granted in 2010.



Mekel Richardson is on track to receive her PhD in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Tennessee Medical School in Memphis in 2010.



Cornelius Toole Jr. is working on his dissertation in the field of Computer Science at Louisiana State University and is looking forward to receiving his Ph.D. this year, 2009.



Isi Tolliver is finishing up her qualifying exams in Biochemistry at Vanderbilt University and is on track to receive her Ph.D. in 2011.

Tyisha Traylor, will receive her PhD in Neuropharmacology in 2010 from Albany Medical College in New York.



Cohort Two: 2004-2006



Angela Fortner is shown here with Cornel West, Class of 1943 University Professor at Princeton University.

Erika Brown: **Jackson State University**

As a doctoral candidate in Environmental Science, Erica Brown has published 3 articles in top tier journals and is currently completing her dissertation, which is entitled "Molecular and Cellular Mechanisms Involved in Arsenic Trioxide Toxicity to Human Liver Carcinoma (HepG2) Cells." She will be graduating with her Ph.D. in December of this year, 2009. Erika has twice presented at the International Symposium on Metal Ions in Biology and Medicine: once in Portugal while a Bridge to the Doctorate fellow and once this past May in Corsica, France.

Angela Fortner: **Princeton University**

After the Bridge to the Doctorate Program, chemistry major Angela Fortner headed off to Princeton University where she has continued to excel in her studies and research. Last year she passed her PhD candidacy exam and is currently working on her dissertation, which is entitled "High Throughput Screen Identifies Compounds that Inhibit Alzheimer's Peptide Aggregation and Rescues Cell Toxicity." Angela anticipates presenting at a conference in May in Israel and completing her doctoral degree in 2011.



Erika Brown pictured with Dean Mark Hardy (left) and DR. Abdul Mohamed, Dean Emeritus and LSMAMP Program PI.

*I appreciate the Bridge to the Doctorate Program and its directors and staff members that make the program a success and allow minority students to dream and accomplish what sometimes seems impossible. **Erika Brown***

Cohort Three: 2005-2007

Jelani Zarif: Michigan State University

Jelani Zarif will have completed his course work and teaching assistantship assignments by the end of the fall semester. He has had his first Committee Meeting and will be taking his comprehensive exam sometime this summer (late July or Early August). He is applying for a number of minority scholarships to continue his studies. The chief of which is the Dept of Defense (DOD) Prostate Cancer Research Program Fellowship for Pre-Doctoral Students. He expects to receive his doctoral degree in 2012.



Derrick White: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

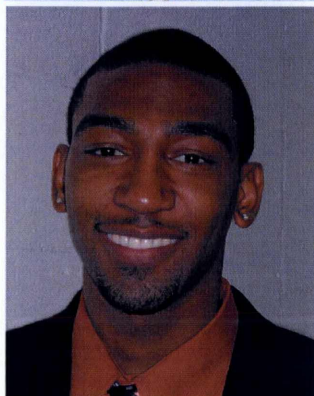
Derrick White will be taking his qualifying exams in the fall of 2009 and has one more full year of course work. He is looking forward to completing his doctoral degree in Biology in 2013. Derrick is also a candidate for president or vice-president of the Biological Graduate Science Association in Microbiology and Molecular Biology.



Cohort Four: 2006-2008

Justin Rice and Miguel Gates: Louisiana Tech University

Justin Rice and Miguel Gates are completing their first year of course work at Louisiana Tech. Both have chosen mentors that in Mr. Rice's words "are funded, published, active in their field of research, and well respected among their colleagues and the scientific community." They both anticipate achieving their Ph.D.s by 2013.



Vyvyca Jones: Michigan State University

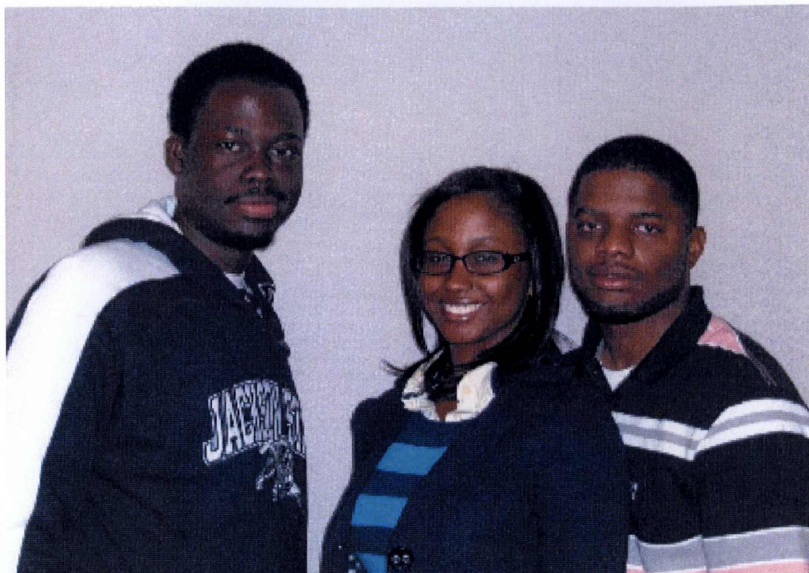
Vyvyca Jones will complete her course work at the end of next year and anticipates completing her doctoral requirements and graduating in May of 2013.

LSMAMP helped me become a competitive candidate ... to graduate school. I feel like the learning environment constructed by LSMAMP facilitated my ability to be an excellent presenter. I am eternally grateful for the guidance provided by the LSMAMP program.

Vyvyca Jones

Cohort Five: 2007-2009 PhD Program Applications

- Cortessia Badie:** Biology
University of Tennessee Health Science Center, North Carolina State University
- Teresa Demeritte:** Biology and Chemistry
IUPUI, University of Southern Mississippi
- Eric Evans:** Environmental Science
University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- Diahanna Hackett:** Biology
IUPUI, Jackson State University
- Stephanie Hughes:** Biology
Harvard, Carnegie Mellon, Johns Hopkins, Georgetown
- Ricky McGruder:** Computer Engineering
Louisiana Tech University, Mississippi State University
- Danielle McShan:** Chemistry
University of Maryland Baltimore Campus, IUPUI, University of Alabama Birmingham
- Wanda Payne:** Mathematics
University of Mississippi, University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi State University
- Jetaime Ross:** Biology
Michigan State University, Stanford University, University of Florida, University of Maryland Baltimore Campus
- Kelisha Turner:** Biology
IUPUI, University of Florida
- Ivan Walker:** Chemistry
Stanford University, Mississippi State University



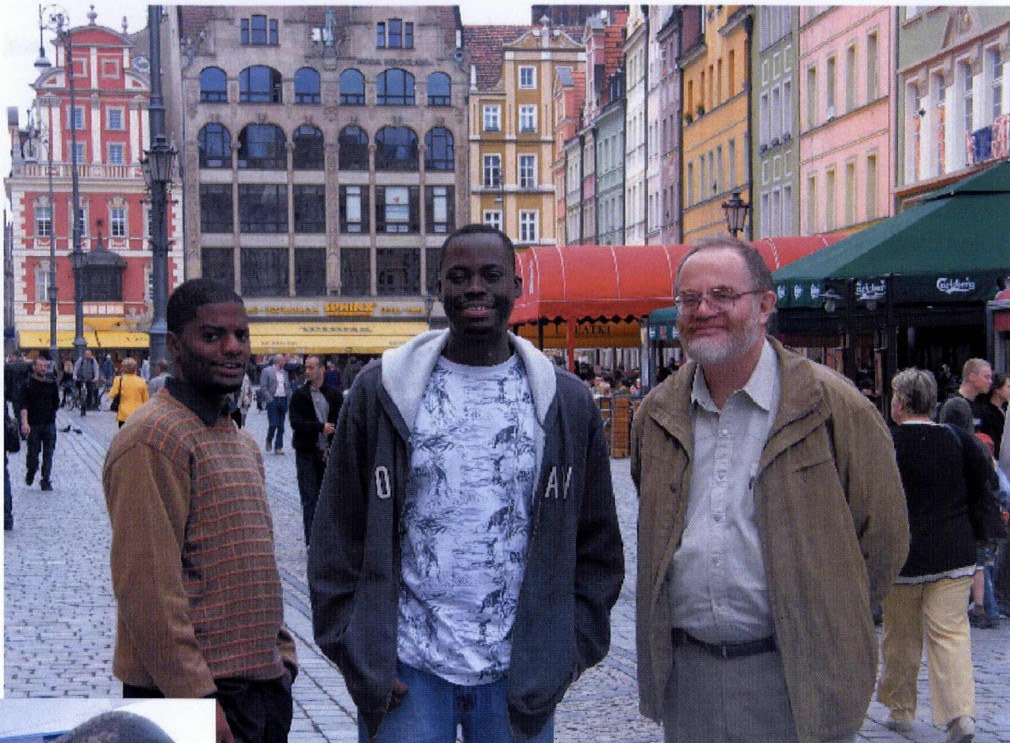
Ricky McGruder (left) and Ivan Walker (right) traveled to Poland last year for their summer research experience and Jetaime Ross (center) presented her research at the International Symposium on Metal Ions in Biology and Medicine in Corsica, France, last summer.

Cohort Six: 2008-2010 Summer Research Placements

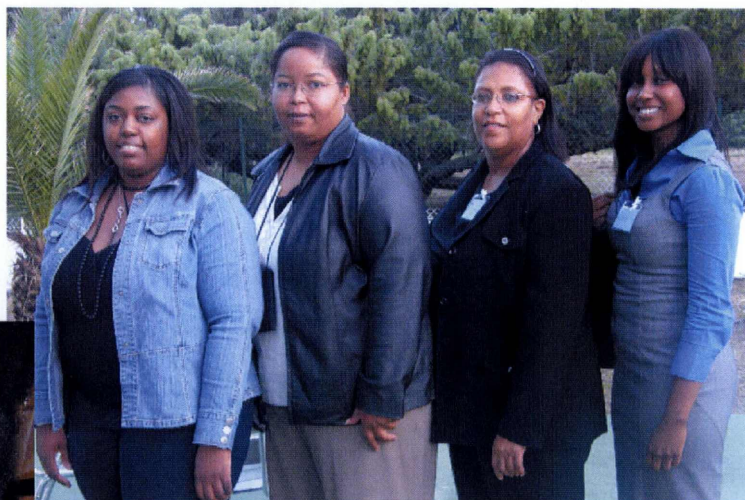
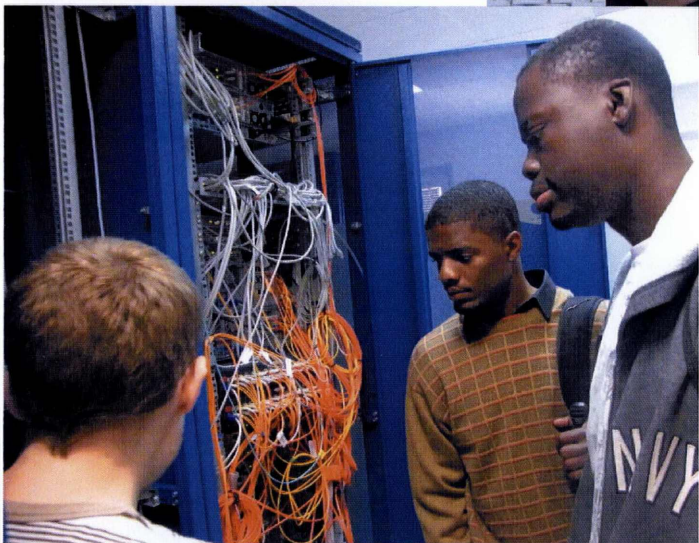
- Tancia Boone:** Mathematics
University of California Santa Barbara
- Crystal Boston:** Computer Science
University of Indiana, Bloomington and China
- Cendrika Dates:** Chemistry
University of California San Francisco
- Chantain Greer:** Computer Engineering
Oak Ridge National Lab and China
- Brandon Hill:** Biology
National Institutes of Health and China
- Shantelle Hughes:** Chemistry
IUPUI and China
- Mohamed Idris:** Computer Engineering
Oak Ridge National Lab and China
- Rosalyn Johnson:** Computer Science
University of Indiana, Bloomington
- Jarvis McWilliams:** Computer Engineering
ERDC
- Camara Saikou:** Computer Science
University of Indiana, Bloomington
- Tiffani Slaughter:** Chemistry
University of California Santa Barbara
- Baraka Williams:** Biostatistics
IUPUI



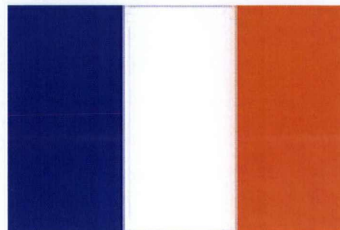
Bound for Guangxi University and Guangxi Normal University this coming summer are (from left to right): Mohamed Idris, Crystal Boston, Chantain Greer and Brandon Hill. Joining them, but not pictured are Shantelle Hughes and Tiffani Slaughter.



Ricky McGruder (center) and Ivan Walker (left) are pictured above with their mentor Dr. Andrzej Sokalski of Wroclaw University. At left, Ricky and Ivan contemplate a summer of computer engineering research.



Above and Left: Erika Brown (left above) and Jetaime Ross (right above) are pictured with other students from JSU at the International Symposium on Metal Ions in Biology and Medicine in France.



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the Graduate School, University of Florida, carried their theme through at his evening presentation, which focused on national and international challenges in graduate education. Tuesday morning saw Dr. Linda Petzold, member of the American Academy of Engineering and Professor, Departments of Mechanical & Environmental Engineering & Computer Science at the University of California Santa Barbara, take to the platform to share her journey to the professoriate and her enthusiasm for inter-disciplinary research. At the closing awards luncheon, the participants had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Ronald Mason, President of Jackson State University, speak about current interests in all things scientific and about his aspirations for the students and faculty of all the institutions present at the symposium.

Student Participation

As mentioned the students at this event included representatives from all of the alliance sites (Alcorn State University, Delta State University, Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, Mississippi Valley State University, Tougaloo College, the University of Mississippi, and the University of Southern Mississippi) students from Fayetteville State University in North Carolina and Howard University in Washington, D.C

Exhibitors

Representatives were also present representing the "Big Ten" schools (University Of Illinois, Indiana University, University

of Iowa, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, Ohio State University, Penn State University, Purdue University and the University of Wisconsin) to actively recruit our students for their summer research internships and graduate schools. They were overwhelmed by the southern hospitality and the number of students attending. They assured the planning committee that they would be returning next year. Presentations were also made by Genius360 on GRE preparation and by four young engineers from Northrop Grumman on "life in the business world" and on the need for STEM graduates in industry.

Awards Luncheon

At the closing luncheon certificate recognition and monetary awards are given each year for the top three presenters, both undergraduate and graduate students, and the announcements are highly anticipated. **This Year's Winners**

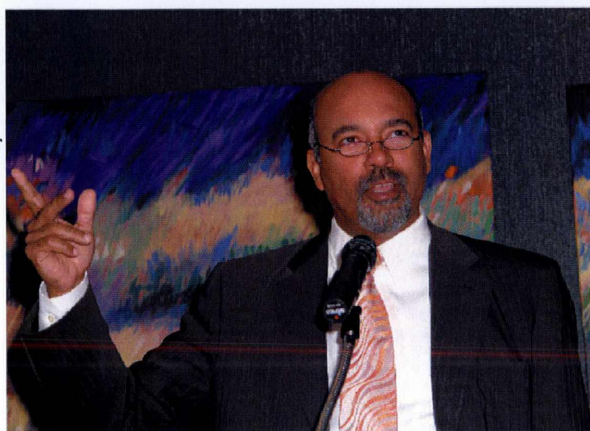
This years winners of the poster presentations in the undergraduate category were as follows: 1st Place, Will Gray III, University of Southern Mississippi; 2nd Place,



Recruiter Denise Yates of the University of Illinois-Chicago was inundated throughout the Symposium by students eager for information on summer internships and graduate school opportunities.



Award winner, Renada Scott, of the Alcorn State University during her award winning oral presentation.

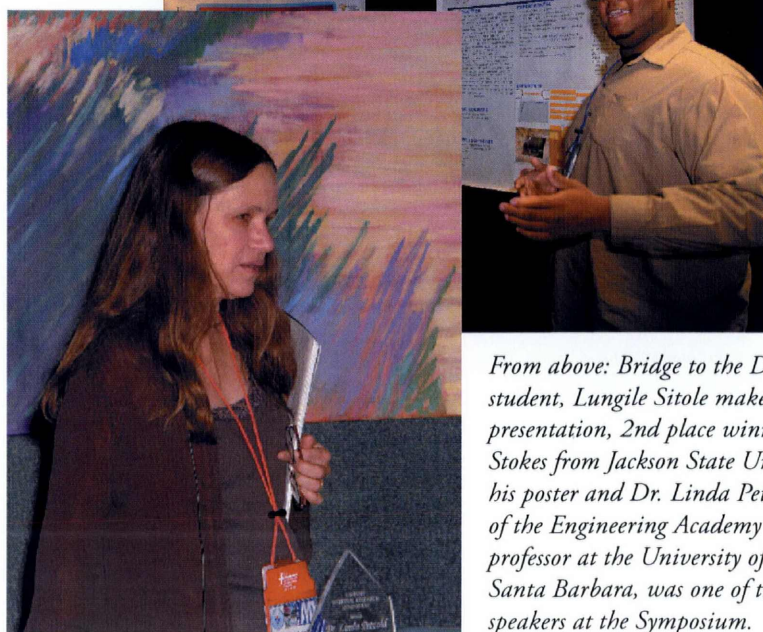
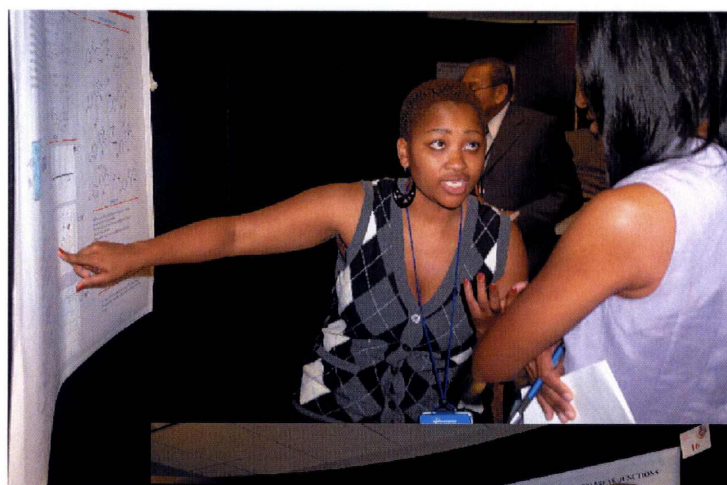


President of Jackson State University, Dr. Ronald Mason during his keynote address at the Awards Luncheon for the National Research Symposium.



Oral and Poster Presentation Award Winners (from left to right): Will Gray III from the University of Southern Mississippi, Ivan Walker-Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow, Stephahie Hughes-Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow, Justin Evans from Jackson State University, Fayetteville State University, Mohamed Idris-Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow, Brandon Hill-Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow, Justin Evans, Fayetteville State University, Toyin Alli from the University of Mississippi and Renada Scott from Alcorn State University.

Derrick Stokes, Jackson State University; 3rd Place, Elizabeth Muriuki, Delta State University. The Graduate student winners in poster presentations were: 1st Place, Mohamed Idris, Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow at Jackson State University; 2nd Place, Karen Sadtler, Environmental Science, Jackson State University; 3rd Place, Brandon Hill, Bridge to the Doctorate Fellow at Jackson State University. Oral Undergraduate winners were: 1st Place, Renada Scott, Alcorn State University; 2nd Place, Toyin Alli, University of Mississippi; 3rd Place, Justin Evans, Fayetteville State University. Graduate Oral Presentation prizes went to the following: 1st Place, Ivan Walker, JSU Bridge to the Doctorate student; 2nd Place, Stephanie Hughes, JSU Bridge to the Doctorate student and 3rd Place, Wentong Lu, Chemistry, Jackson State University.



Symposium Sponsors

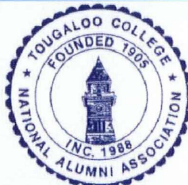
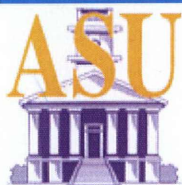
The Symposium was co-sponsored by the Louis Stokes Mississippi Alliance for Minority Participation (LSMAMP) program, the JSU Office of Research and Federal Relations, the CSET Office of Strategic Initiatives, the Minority Access to Research Centers (MARC) program and by the Historically Black Colleges and Universities-Undergraduate Program's (HBCU-UP's) Science and Technology Access to Research and Graduate Education (STARGE.) Its intent is to positively impact students and their entrance into the workforce and academic pipelines.

From above: Bridge to the Doctorate student, Lungile Sitole makes her poster presentation, 2nd place winner Derrick Stokes from Jackson State University attends his poster and Dr. Linda Petzold, member of the Engineering Academy of Science and professor at the University of California Santa Barbara, was one of the keynote speakers at the Symposium.



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for Minority Participation**

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