

Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP)

Underrepresentation of minorities among the science, mathematics, engineering and technology (SMET) fields is a long-standing problem. This untapped talent has serious consequences for the nation's ability to compete in the world economy driven by technological advances, as well as for a large segment of the nation's citizens who suffer loss of opportunity. As part of ongoing efforts to address this problem, NSF initiated in 1990 the LSAMP program to focus on increasing the quality and quantity of students receiving baccalaureate degrees in SMET disciplines. LSAMP puts particular emphasis on students from groups that are consistently underrepresented in these fields. The long-range goal of this program is to increase the number of students continuing on to graduate schools for a doctorate degree in one of the SMET fields and who then choose to take faculty positions on college and university campuses. This multidisciplinary undergraduate program works by supporting undergraduate systemic reform through alliances that include partners from both two- and four-year higher education institutions, businesses and

industries, national research laboratories, and local, state, and federal agencies.

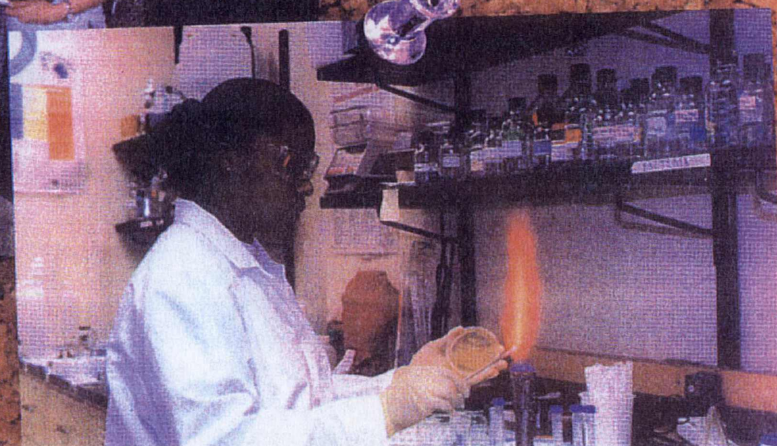
Currently, 28 alliances, ranging from citywide (e.g., New York City, Detroit) to statewide (e.g., California, North Carolina) to multistate (e.g., Florida-Georgia), are supported by the LSAMP program.

One of the highly successful aspects of this program is faculty mentoring which pairs undergraduate students with a faculty member. This collaboration achieves a multiplier effect, resulting in personal and professional growth for undergraduates through research experiences including co-authoring scientific papers.

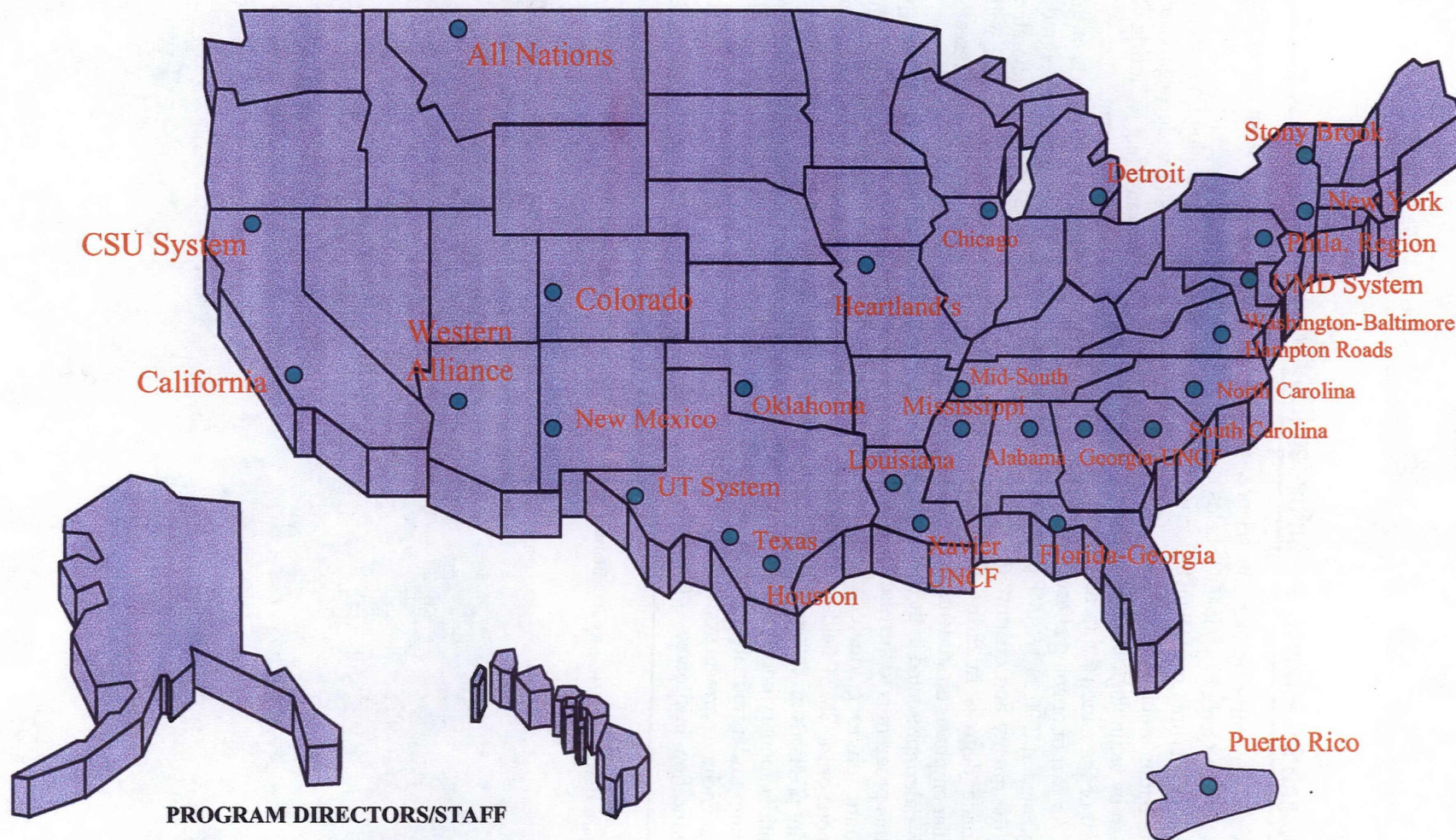
LSAMP also gives consideration to the critical transition points in SMET education such as high school-to-college, 2-year to 4-year college; undergraduate-to-graduate study; and graduate study-to-faculty career. Since NSF started the LSAMP, the number of B.S. degrees awarded to minority students has risen from under 4,000 in 1990 to over 20,000 in 1998 at participating institutions.

Photo courtesy of Marjorie DeMartino, University of California, Irvine

Photo courtesy of Dr. Angela Williams, University of South Carolina



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