

25-percent increase in black STEM Ph.D.s, yet room to grow

Posted At : March 21, 2016 8:26 AM | Posted By : Mavis Carr

Related Categories: Science

By Ashley Hendricks

The importance of STEM [Science Technology, Engineering and Math] is often overlooked, especially in the black community. According to the data from the **National Science Foundation**, the number of black men who earn science and engineering doctorates grew by more than 25 percent in 10 years. Although there is an increase, there is plenty of room for growth in this field.



The compelling truth about STEM growth is that our future crucially depends on it, said experts at Hampton University's 38th Annual Black Family Conference, hosted by the School of Science and titled "Full STEAM Ahead: Healthy Minds and Bodies Securing our Future." STEM disciplines plus Fine and Performing Arts were conference focal points March 16-18.

STEM is used every day. For example, **science** includes the sun, plants, water, weather, and most importantly food. These are just a few things that fall under the contribution of science.

Then there's **technology**. The love that society has for technology is undeniable. Technology is not limited to smartphones and tablets. It includes television, radio, microscopes, and **steering wheels**.

Don't forget about the roads everyone drives on, mind-blowing skyscrapers, and bridges that make traveling a lot easier. Thanks to **engineering** specialists, humans have that luxury.

And lastly, the importance of **mathematics**. One doesn't have to be a math whiz to appreciate how mathematics has advanced the world. Math is everywhere – in **grocery stores**, the local bank, investments, and family and college budgets.

Our lives depend on STEM and it is time to continue to advocate and educate black men, women and children, hence the reason why Hampton University is providing a platform for its students and the public to learn more about STEM and art.

"At this year's conference, we want to engage in meaningful conversations and activities that will empower your family," said **Dr. Michelle Claville**, School of Science assistant dean and conference chairperson. "Our speakers

and panelists will help dispel myths that are culpable for underrepresentation in STEM fields, show the connection between the arts and the sciences through music, and be safe in cyberspace."

Dr. Luther Williams opened the conference as the keynote speaker. He is currently an emeritus professor at Tuskegee University. He is recognized for his dedication and leadership roles in creating opportunities for minorities in the sciences. In 1984, he served as the president of Atlanta University and later served as the chair of the White House Biotechnology Science Coordinating Committee.

*The writer is a student in the **Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications***