

## Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

**With a Ph.D. in Microbiology** and years of teaching experience, Dr. Ava Morrow is now the Owner and CEO of a sign language interpreting service. Also, she has many community activities including being the Program Director for the **STEM Program** of the **D.C. Metro HBCU Alumni Alliance**. The Alliance works in collaboration with Kaiser Permanente and other organizations.

**There are jobs in STEM**, she said, good jobs, and there will be for years to come. The U.S. needs more students in these fields. Participation of African-Americans, Latinos, and people with disabilities is especially low. Those who study STEM can help solve problems of hunger, air pollution, and aging populations, and more.

Of African-Americans in STEM, she said, 74% are graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (**HBCUs**). The HBCU Alumni Alliance helps and encourages high school students to pursue careers in STEM. Then, they follow them through college, help them obtain **internships**, and even then, continues to follow their progress. Their work includes workshops for high school students, conducted by HBCU graduates who work in STEM.

A guest, Barry, commented that much good talent is being wasted because STEM programs have too little capacity. Dr. Morrow agreed and commented that interest was increasing, not just in high schools, but in **middle** and even **elementary** schools. Universities should encourage this interest and prepare to absorb these students.

The DC HBCU STEM Program is on several websites, of which the most informative is <http://www.dchbcu.org>

