

I am writing to request your support to assist young African Americans who wish to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields.

The Benjamin Banneker Institute for Science and Technology was established under a Congressional mandate in 2003 to address this population's low participation rates in STEM disciplines. Since then we have launched the Decade of Blacks in Science, and established a Network of Networks among Black Science Membership organizations. Each year we celebrate the contributions of individuals and organizations who are making a difference in this arena by hosting the Benjamin Banneker Legacy Awards Gala in Washington, DC. Recipients of this prestigious Award include former Director of the National Science Foundation and President of Morehouse College, Dr. Walter Massey; Surgeon General of the United States Navy Vice Admiral Adam M. Robinson; and former astronaut, Dr. Mae Jamison.

Genius exists in all the nooks and crannies of our society, in all our people, across every imaginable spectrum. The challenges our nation must solve this century if we are to avoid cataclysmic change in our way of life are daunting. Chief among these are global warming, energy independence, national competitiveness, and health care. We need to tap into all of our sources of creative problem-solving insight if we hope to make real progress in these areas. Unfortunately, historical biases continue to inhibit our ability to fully exploit all of our resources.

Disparities are growing in the United States and these disparities are exacerbated by unequal chances. A major source of growing disparities in this information intensive age is the increasingly powerful truth that an excellent education is a prerequisite to advancement. Your performance at bat is determined by the quality of your education. African Americans are disproportionately affected by the inadequacies of our system of public education. Ultimately, the employability of Black people at all levels of our society is dependent upon increasing their technical skills. Progress has been slow, while at the same time, the global pace of technological advancement has become the stuff of legends.

It is time we stepped out on the greatness of America and offered to the world the empowering model for humanity in this technological age that America is meant to be! I say to you boldly and without equivocation that our diversity is an integral part of our greatness, and that it is imperative that in whatever plans we make for our country now and in the future, most particularly plans that we make for national competitiveness, that we capitalize on that global asset. The work of the Banneker Institute represents an opportunity to address many of the inequities that have plagued our educational systems since the beginning of the Republic. Technology is a great leveler, and the stability of our democracy depends on belief in the kind of fairness that comes from a level playing field.

The work of the Banneker Institute has received widespread support. Congressman Chaka Fattah is the primary congressional sponsor of the Banneker Institute. For the past two years, Bill Cosby has served as keynote speaker at the annual Awards Gala. House Majority Whip, Congressman James Clyburn served as Keynote Speaker at the launch of the Network of Networks. Our major corporate sponsors include Northrop Grumman, Exxon Mobil, and Lockheed Martin. We have also received support from such organizations as the Edison Electric Institute, the Nuclear Energy Institute, the American Society of Civil Engineers, NASA, the Office of Naval Research, and Drexel University.

We hope this campaign captures your imagination and inspires you to join with us to create not only a more competitive America, but a more equitable America as well. Your tax deductible gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250, or more will help make this vision possible. You may contribute by credit card through our website at www.thebannekerinstitute.org, or by check by completing the form below and returning it to us along with your contribution. We have created a [information folder](#) on the website to give you more background information about the work of the Banneker Institute. The Benjamin Banneker Institute for Science and Technology is a project of Catalyst, a 501C3 corporation.



THE BENJAMIN BANNEKER
Institute for Science and Technology

Yes I would like to support the *Banneker Institute's mission.

___ Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____

___ I hereby commit to contribute \$_____ monthly for ___ years

___ I hereby commit to contribute \$_____ annually for ___ years

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Contributions can be made online at www.thebannekerinstitute.org or through the mail. Please send checks to:

The Benjamin Banneker Institute for Science and Technology
1661 Park Road, NW
Suite 201
Washington, DC 20010

Your donation is 100%tax deductible.
Thank you for your support!

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