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Minorities Road to Graduate School: The Xavier Experience

ANDERSON SUNDA-MEYA, Xavier University of Louisiana

During the past decade, Xavier University of Louisiana has ranked first nationally in the number of African American students who have earned undergraduate degrees in biology, chemistry, physics, and the physical sciences overall. Recent data shows that Xavier also ranks 8th in the nation in producing African American students who go on to earn science and engineering PhDs. A look at Xavier's "way" will examine several components that contribute to its success: pre-college preparation, recruitment programs, admissions policies, financial assistance, and academic monitoring programs. By promoting comprehensive recruitment and retention strategies and by leveling the playing field, Xavier experience may offer a paradigm and a model for increasing the pool of motivated, talented and well-prepared minority applicants ready to tackle the rigors of a graduate level education in physics.