

MAR05-2004-010105

Abstract for an Invited Paper  
for the MAR05 Meeting of  
the American Physical Society

### **The Status of African American Physicists within the DOE Laboratories**

KEITH JACKSON, President of the National Society of Black Physicists

In May 2002 there was a backpage article published in American Physical Society Newsletter by the President of the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP). This article showed that of the 3372 professional physicists employed at the DOE national labs, only 11 are African American, which on a percentage basis is 4 times less than the total availability of Ph.D. African American physicists in the labor force. NSBP want to provide an update of the interaction between National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP) and the department of Energy in particular the Office of Science on the issue of employment of African American Physicists in scientific and technical. You might ask the following question: Why should the current generation of African American Physicists be concerned about their underrepresentation on the scientific staffs of the DOE National Laboratories? The answer to this question may vary from person to person, but I would like to propose the following: The National Laboratories are the largest providers of career opportunities in Physics in the United States. There is a general view in the community; African Americans are not getting a return on their national investment in the DOE National Labs. Failure to engage with HBCUs through their user facilities causes a training or skills deficit when it comes to preparing students to participate at the forefront of physics research. By rebuffing interactions with HBCUs, as many the laboratories have done, the national laboratories are in effect refusing to transfer scientific knowledge to the stakeholders in the African American community. The update will contain some additional information about NSBP proposals to solve the problem of underrepresentation of African American and Hispanic physicists within the National Laboratories and how the Office of Science has response these proposals.