

DATE: JUNE 22, 2022

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. BERNARD A. HARRIS JR., 2022 RECIPIENT OF THE JAMES BRYANT CONANT AWARD!

Education Commission of the States is pleased to honor Dr. Bernard A. Harris Jr., CEO of the National Math and Science Initiative, with the 2022 James Bryant Conant Award, in recognition of his steadfast commitment to expanding opportunity and diversifying the nation's talent pool in the STEM fields.

James Bryant Conant Award



Dr. Bernard A. Harris Jr.
CEO, National Math and Science Initiative

As a physician, business leader and the first Black astronaut to walk in space, Harris embodies the benefits and opportunities of STEM education. As CEO of NMSI, he advocates for equitable access to STEM education, particularly for students furthest from these opportunities currently. NMSI partners with schools, school systems and state and federal policymakers to promote high-quality STEM education.

In the last 15 years, under Harris' leadership as board member and later as CEO, NMSI programs have supported more than 2 million students across the country and trained more than 65,000 teachers in the STEM disciplines. Specifically, NMSI's College Readiness Program, which boosts participation in Advanced Placement courses and helps students prepare for the rigors of college, is in place at more than 1,300 schools in 40 states. These students' math, science and engineering scores have exceeded national averages by as many as 22 percentage points in the last four years.

Harris' pursuit of successful outcomes and opportunities for students mirrors the success he displays in his pursuits. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including seven honorary doctorates, the NASA Space Flight Medal and the NASA Award of Merit. "Dr. Harris — in his life story as a physician, trailblazing astronaut and a steadfast advocate to improve American education — provides an inspiration to us all," a nomination letter read.

Education Commission of the States will present Harris with the Conant Award at the 2022 National Forum on Education Policy, taking place July 13-15 in Washington, D.C.



The James Bryant Conant Award is one of three awards that Education Commission of the States gives each year to celebrate outstanding commitment to public education. The others are the Frank Newman Award for State Innovation, which recognizes states or territories, and the Education Commission of the States Corporate Award, which recognizes a for-profit corporation, nonprofit organization or foundation.

For more information about Harris or NMSI, contact: Nichole Austion, senior director of marketing communications, at NAustion@nms.org.

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