

# SGA's Dr. Calvin Mackie Calls on U.S. to Prioritize Teaching STEM Skills and Techniques to African American Children

*Leader of STEM Global Action Cites Perils of Failing to Teach STEM Education at Early Ages; Says Focus Needed to Close Racial Gap in STEM College Grads and Jobs*

HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, August 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr. Calvin Mackie, leader of STEM Global Action (SGA), called on educators, government and corporate America to support teaching Black and other children of color science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills at earlier ages to better prepare them for the jobs and careers today and in the future.



Dr. Calvin Mackie

Speaking recently at a forum sponsored by alliantgroup, a Texas management and tax consulting firm, Dr. Mackie noted that Black children toss footballs and basketballs while they are in “the

cradle,” but rarely are introduced to STEM as youngsters. Without the early focus on these topics, a wide gap exists between Black and Whites in STEM college graduates and jobs.

“

We have to talk about STEM for all. We've got to make sure that the resources are applied equally to communities...We have to meet kids where they are and start to expose them at the beginning,”

*Dr. Calvin Mackie*

“We have to meet kids where they are and start to expose them at the beginning,” Dr. Mackie said, adding that “in Texas...every Black and Brown boy touches the football before the age of four.” Further, Dr. Mackie said that as the nation engages a 4th Industrial Revolution centered around technological advances, it’s imperative that everyone has sufficient STEM skills to advance in our

society and have successful life outcomes.

“We have to talk about STEM for all. We've got to make sure that the resources...are applied equally to communities,” said Dr. Mackie, who holds Bachelor of Science degrees in Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering (Morehouse College), as

well as a Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. (Georgia Tech). Dr. Mackie spoke at alliantgroup's STEM Summit: Closing the Gap from Classroom to Industry, which discussed strategies on closing the STEM gap in America.



African American workers make up 9% of the STEM workforce, smaller than the 11% share of all employed U.S. adults. And, Blacks are only 5% of those in engineering and architecture and 6% in life and physical science jobs. Data also shows that roughly 20% of Whites and students of color declare STEM subjects as majors entering college, but nearly 40% of minority students change their majors and more than 20% leave school without earning a degree. While Blacks, Native Americans, Alaska Natives and Hispanics collectively form 27% of the population, they account for only 11% of America's science and engineering workers.

Dr. Mackie strives to expand STEM education in communities of color by bringing programming into disadvantaged neighborhoods. In 2013, Dr. Mackie founded STEM NOLA, a New Orleans-based, non-profit that delivers STEM education in churches, community centers and schools. STEM NOLA has impacted more than 70,000 students, 17,000 families and 2,150 schools across the U.S. and in five other countries. “We created a pathway for people to give back,” Dr. Mackie said, explaining that his programs enlist volunteers from companies in local communities to work with the students, and enhance their STEM skills.

Last month, Dr. Mackie, a former tenured Tulane University engineering professor, launched STEM Global Action, a campaign and network of affiliates that advocate and deliver STEM education to children, parents and communities. SGA prioritizes providing STEM learning opportunities to K-12 students in low-income and communities of color. Calling for a “Reckoning on STEM,” Dr. Mackie believes advancing STEM education can help counter the effect of racism and societal inequities by creating pathways to quality jobs and careers.

Alliantgroup's corporate mission is to strengthen American businesses through reinvestment in innovation and job growth. Also attending their summit were William T. Harris, CEO of Space Center Houston; Dr. Juliet Breeze, M.D, CEO of Next Level Urgent Care; former congressman Rick White, who is CEO of Technet; Deirdre Ricketts, alliantgroup Director of STEAM Education; and Chuck Wilson, Executive Director of National Systems Contractors Association.

During the discussion, Dr. Mackie noted the importance of role models, citing the experts that he has called upon to work with his own children. But he stressed that much more is needed, especially for the children in under-resourced communities, who don't have access to expansive STEM networks like his own.

"We need more than role models," he asserted. "We have to marshal resources, technology and human resources back into those communities, so those kids can see, touch and feel people who look like them, even some who don't look like them, so they know that they can achieve at those levels, too."

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(For print or broadcast interviews with Dr. Calvin Mackie, please contact Michael K. Frisby, [mike@frisbyassociates.com](mailto:mike@frisbyassociates.com) or 202-625-4328.)

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[Let's Talk STEM with Dr. Calvin Mackie](#), a podcast series that features interviews with guests from all aspects of STEM – entrepreneurs, educators, corporate leaders, students – who will talk about the importance of STEM in their lives today. They are the mentors for the next generation of STEM leaders, models of success for others to follow.

Visit the STEM Global Action website at [www.STEMglobalaction.com](http://www.STEMglobalaction.com) where you can find:

[STEM Global Action Today](#), a newsletter with comprehensive articles on some of the most important issues related to STEM, and takes readers into the lives of STEM educators and their extraordinary students, who will be the STEM leaders of tomorrow.

[STEM Global Action Data Center](#), a one-stop resource library for studies, reports, video presentations and news coverage about STEM.

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