Tuesday, March 19, 2013 2:30PM - 4:54PM –
Session J10 COM: Invited Session: Fostering Collaborations in Minority-Serving Institutions
309 - Joseph Barranco, San Francisco State University

2:30PM J10.00001 Pipeline and Research Collaborations with MSIs CHARLES WEATHERFORD, Physics Department, Florida A&M University — I am a Physics faculty member at an HBCU (Historically Black College/University). I am currently the chairperson of physics at Florida A&M University and have occupied this position for seventeen of the last twenty-three years. I am very supportive of MSIs in general but my experience has been at an HBCU and thus my statements are mostly directed at interactions with HBCUs. My remarks are directed towards facilitating pipeline and research collaborations between MSIs (minority-serving institutions) and majority research universities, government scientific laboratories and agencies, and industry (majority collaborating institutions–MCIs). I will make some generally applicable statements about what I consider are prerequisites for the MSIs and the MCIs needed to establish effective collaborations. I will then make several distinctions which are specific to HBCUs.

3:06PM J10.00002 The Center for Gravitational Wave Astronomy at UTB1 , MARIO DIAZ, The University of Texas at Brownsville — In this talk I will succinctly describe the first ten years of research and educational activity at the Center for Gravitational Wave Astronomy at The University of Texas at Brownsville as a potential model for fostering collaborations between minority serving institutions and major research institutions in the USA.

1The author acknowledges support from NASA grant NNX09AV06A and from NSF grant HRD1242090.

3:42PM J10.00003 Successful strategies for building thriving undergraduate physics programs at minority serving institutions , QUINTON WILLIAMS, Jackson State University — After having been pulled back from the brink of academic program deletion, Jackson State University (Jackson, Mississippi) is now the only HBCU (Historically Black College and University) listed as a top producer of B.S. degrees earned by African Americans in both fields of physics and geoscience. Very pragmatic, strategic actions were taken to enhance the undergraduate degree program which resulted in it becoming one of the most productive academic units at the university. Successful strategies will be shared for growing the enrollment of physics majors, building productive research/educational programs, and improving the academic performance of underprepared students. Despite myriad challenges faced by programs at minority serving institutions in a highly competitive 21st century higher education system, it is still possible for undergraduate physics programs to transition from surviving to thriving.

4:18PM J10.00004 A Perspective on the Intersection of Institutional Identity and Collaborative Research: Toward More Effective Partnering With Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) , JOHN HARKLESS, Department of Chemistry, Howard University — Science departments at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) play important roles in providing quality education in a distinctive environment. The presenter is an HBCU alumnus who earned his doctorate from a primarily majority institution (PMI) and has had experience as both PMI and HBCU faculty. This experience frames and informs the observations shared in this presentation about the unique challenges and opportunities across an array of HBCU departments. Resources available, demographics impacted, current challenges, and the value of the institution to students, external partners, and the community-at-large will be discussed, with a focus on development of dialogue on the cultural and collaborative competencies necessary to working across institutional types.