How the Next Generation Can Impact the Future of Policymaking in STEM Education and Workforce Development

Dr. Adriana Bankston, JSPG CEO & Managing Publisher; Principal Legislative Analyst, University of California

The Journal of Science Policy & Governance (JSPG) is an internationally recognized, open-access peer-reviewed publication dedicated to elevating students, post-docs, policy fellows and young scholars in science, technology and innovation policy and governance debate worldwide. JSPG publishes high-quality articles covering the widest range of topics in formats that are accessible to policymakers. Since 2011, JSPG has served as a vehicle for students and early career researchers to bolster their research and writing credentials in science policy.

In May 2022, JSPG and Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society, published a Special Topics Issue on ‘Re-envisioning STEM Education and Workforce Development for the 21st Century’, which stems from discussions on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on future generations in terms of educational opportunities, learning formats, and STEM workforce structure and development. In this special issue, early-career authors highlighted challenges and solutions to DEI issues in STEM education, civic science, diverse entry points into the STEM workforce and the empowerment of workers.

In this session, Dr. Adriana Bankston, JSPG’s CEO & Managing Publisher, will describe current opportunities and future trends in STEM education and workforce development in the United States based on this Special Topics Issue, including the policy changes and federal government investments necessary to maintain our nation’s competitiveness in science and technology.

As Principal Legislative Analyst at the University of California (UC), Dr. Bankston serves as an advocate for UC with Congress, the Administration and federal agencies, and is responsible for legislative analysis and advocacy for federal policy impacting university research. In this position, Dr. Bankston contributed to UC priority documents, letters and community letters on DEI in research and graduate education, and led a number of Advocacy Days and meetings with Capitol Hill staff in support of research funding and STEM workforce development. Notably, she drafted a STEM pipeline amendment to include postdoctoral researchers as eligible recipients of the professional development supplement. The amendment was adopted and included in the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, which was signed into law by President Biden in August 2022. Read more about Dr. Bankston's contributions to science policy and advocacy.

Prior to this role, Dr. Bankston was a Policy & Advocacy Fellow at the Society for Neuroscience, where she provided staff support for special and on-going projects, including the society’s annual lobby event and the annual meeting. Dr. Bankston is also a Biomedical Workforce & Policy Research Investigator at the STEM Advocacy Institute, and Co-Chair of the Education Taskforce with Women in Government Relations (WGR). Dr. Bankston has dedicated much of her career to empowering the next generation in science and policy, and providing them with opportunities to
make their voices heard on issues they care about. In this session, Dr. Bankston will describe her career path from research into science policy and advocacy around university research, and provide examples of how graduate students, postdocs, policy fellows and young scholars can impact policymaking in STEM education and workforce development in the United States.

In recognition of her contributions to science policy and connecting science and society, Adriana was named among the Top 50 Women Leaders of DC for 2022, and awarded the inaugural 2022 ARIS Emerging Broader Impacts Leader Award. Adriana earned her Ph.D. in Biochemistry, Cell and Developmental Biology from Emory University.