

EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Unfinished

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There is no better time than this to draw attention to the research and practice of leaders who work toward achieving broadening participation success within their institutions and across the entire undergraduate STEM reform community. This Editor's Perspective calls into view the extraordinary work of several authors, the perplexing times in which they write, and our collective resistance to calls for us to be silent. Through empirical research and leadership narrative, this issue affirms the importance and urgency of effective leadership in STEM higher education, and the necessity for this journal's existence.

This issue of the Journal of STEM Leadership and Broadening Participation comes at a defining moment – when we are confronted with both threats to our existence as educators and scientists, as well as the imperative to respond with conviction. Like others, our funding stream for this journal was abruptly terminated. And, like others, we understand that the work of scholarly outlets like this one, given their historical importance, is not finished. In the short time that we were funded, we managed to build a website, release our inaugural issue, and be selected for inclusion in the Library of Congress's digital collections. To continue and expand our work – albeit perhaps at a modified pace – we accept that sacrifices must be made. Indeed, many who served the academy before us also made sacrifices. We dedicate this issue to them and to the bold leaders of broadening participation practice today who are called to serve and also resist the pressure to return to the status quo. This issue represents our resistance. It features an important collection of manuscripts that demonstrate how asset-minded leadership, intentional institutional practices, and innovative theoretical frameworks are shaping the future of STEM higher education.

One contribution by Dr. Ebony McGee, et al., centers on [Equity Ethics](#), a framework rooted in educational justice as both a guiding philosophy of life and an effective academic leadership practice. This study examines how HBCU presidents—many of whom juggle complex roles spanning strategic goal setting, role modeling, leadership, and fundraising—apply Equity Ethics in dismantling educational barriers and creating safe, affirming spaces for racially minoritized students. The career trajectories and leadership narratives

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of these presidents serve as powerful lenses for not only correlating broadening participation principles with student success outcomes but also for re-examining our own leadership motivations and the important role they play in defining our contributions to broadening participation.

Complementing these leadership insights, another manuscript by Dr. Gail Hollowell, et al., spotlights Black women in STEM and their dual role in advancing undergraduate STEM education while navigating gendered disparities in the academy. The [CareFull Scholars Program \(CSP\)](#), established during the COVID-19 pandemic, is highlighted as a healing-centered, relational intervention for Black women in STEM fields. Anchored in four tenets—collective well-being, authentic relationships, equitable engagement, and intellectual rigor—the CSP fosters scholarly productivity and overall faculty wellness by providing an affirming environment where STEM faculty can pursue research as their whole, authentic selves. Developed collaboratively by four scholars through the HBCU STEM Undergraduate Success Research Center’s Analytic Hub, the CSP exemplifies how intentional program design can counteract systemic inequities.

Expanding beyond institutional leadership and targeted interventions, a third manuscript by Dr. Jean Andino, et al., introduces the [Multi-Context Theory \(MCT\)](#) as a promising framework for advancing **Convergence Research (CR)**—the integration of knowledge, methods, and expertise across disciplines to tackle complex institutional challenges. Here, Dr. Andino argues that current academic structures often hinder CR, but MCT offers a balanced approach that values both discipline-specific expertise and systemic, process-oriented collaboration. By activating MCT, institutions can create the conditions necessary for transformative, transdisciplinary research while attracting a more diverse range of voices to STEM inquiry.

Collectively, these articles underscore a shared imperative: the pursuit of equity in undergraduate STEM education is not merely a moral charge but a strategic pathway to scientific innovation and excellence.

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