The activities described below are among the AAAS initiatives that demonstrate the Association’s commitment to enhancing the science and technology workforce, and to making it more diverse.

**Online Effort to Raise Number of Minority Scientists**

Launched with the purpose of diversifying the ranks of the nation's top scientists, the Minority Scientists Network, a new AAAS website, is creating an online community of students, mentors, and administrators. At the heart of MiSciNet are individual voices, sharing personal experiences. These snapshots offer a glimpse into the private pathways chosen by successful minority scientists, and the strategies that effectively help keep them on course. Student essays, in particular, reveal the obstacles that may confront underrepresented scientists, and their tactics for overcoming prejudice and for resisting efforts to keep them from moving forward.

“I am very happy now, doing science policy at the national level and learning how the big decisions in science are made,” says Joan E. Esmyra, a Native American scientist in an essay on MiSciNet. “When I reflect back on the faculty in my graduate program, I realize they were just little fish in a little pond. I, on the other hand, have become a fearless and tough fighter. And I am afraid of no one.”

**Jobs for Young Scientists with Disabilities**

For 25 years, AAAS has worked to bring young scientists with disabilities into the workforce. Its most recent effort is a program known as ENTRY POINT!, which has served as a bridge into jobs in engineering and sciences in both the public and private sectors since 1996. The men and women who take part in the program are either blind or deaf, or they may use wheelchairs or have learning disabilities. But their disabilities do not define them, and have not stopped them from taking jobs as biologists, computer scientists, mechanical engineers, and aerospace scientists.

The ENTRY POINT! program—which received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring, through the National Science Foundation—now claims some 200 alumni. An estimated 92 percent are either working on science or engineering fields, or pursuing degrees in graduate programs.

And the public and private partners in the program say they are delighted at the quality of ENTRY POINT! interns. “Going through AAAS, we knew we could get some of the best talent in the industry,” says Ted Child, Vice President, IBM Workforce Diversity. “We like the students and we like the skills they bring to the job.”

**New Careers for Bioweapons Scientists**

With a grant from the U.S. Commerce Department, AAAS is working with a group of former bioweapons scientists from Russia, providing them with training so that they can apply their skills to challenging and useful work. In 2001, AAAS brought a group of 17 scientists to Washington, DC, for a workshop on technology commercialization and commercialization principles.

“We learned about some new elements of the quality system that we had no idea of. But of course, to implement in our country it will require serious work. Work, work, work!” says one of the participants, Valentina Ivanovna Masycheva, Director of Research and Design in the Technological Institute of Biologically Active Substances for the Russian Research Center of Virology and Biotechnology (VECTOR).
The activities described below are among the AAAS initiatives that demonstrate the Association’s commitment to increase public understanding and appreciation of science and technology:

**Scientists and Engineers as Journalists**

Ann Celi is a medicine/pediatrics physician and researcher at Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA. She is in practice at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates in Boston, where she is conducting a study on the factors that influence women to breastfeed their babies. She is also one of more than 400 scientists and engineers who are alumni of AAAS’s Mass Media Fellowship program.

Every summer about 25 young scientists and engineers are sent to work for newspapers and magazines and for radio and television programs across the country. The purpose of the 28-year-old program is to further public understanding and appreciation of science and technology.

Celi’s 10-week internship at Wisconsin’s Milwaukee Journal in 1992 taught her to explain scientific concepts carefully to journalists, a lesson she draws on when talking publicly about breastfeeding.

“To get substance into a (newspaper) article, you have to make information clear and succinct,” Cecil says. “If you don’t, that will be the first thing the copy editor takes out.”

**Training in Radio and Science Writing for South Africans**

In much of rural Africa, radio is the major means of communicating news and other information. So, radio science journalism is what AAAS staff members are teaching a group of South African journalists and scientists in a three-year program that began in 2001.

With support from the South African Department of Arts, Culture, Science, and Technology (DACST), the DACST-AAAS Science Radio Journalism Fellows Project, is attempting to attract applicants outside the cosmopolitan Johannesburg/Pretoria area. To apply, they must be fluent in an indigenous language.

In August 2001, the first South Africans in the program said they had come to the United States to learn; but the visitors may have taught their hosts something as well.

“If I write a science story, I have to do it in a way that takes into account indigenous knowledge systems,” says Madumane Matloa, 27, a science and technology radio producer for the South African Broadcasting Company. “We have to show that we do not disrespect the ways of our people.”

**Daily Radio Spots Answer Questions, Feature Research**

Since 1988, more than 2,800 of AAAS’s radio shows have run on commercial radio programs across the United States. The 90-second features tell the public about the latest research in science and technology, explaining topics such as the Human Genome Project and the origin of the universe in language that is clear, lively, and free of jargon.

One 2001 spot, for example, features a scientist at the University of Southern California, who studies the timing and impact of earthquakes by digging trenches across faults and examining sediment for evidence of activity.

“To many people, (the trench) looks like a hole in the ground, but to me it’s a physics experiment,” says James Dolan of the University of Southern California in an interview for Science Update. “To me, it’s a window into the past that allows us to see how earthquakes in the past have interacted with one another.”

**Strategies in Action**

For society to reap the full benefits of the promise of research, the scientific enterprise must flourish. That requires financial support, a healthy infrastructure, a public that values the ideals of science, and national leaders who understand the role of science in moving society forward. In addition, scientists and engineers should understand the process for making decisions about science policy and research funding, and be given opportunities to take part in the process.

**Our Goals**

**Strengthen Support for the Science and Technology Enterprise**

AAAS disseminates knowledge about the products of science and technology, the interrelationships among disciplines, and the role basic science plays in producing the technological advances that are integral to improved health care, quality of life and economic prosperity.