Although equal numbers of learners have STEM interest during early education(Wang and Degol, 2017), that interest declines precipitously for students with lower levels of STEM self-efficacy (Blotnicky et al., 2018). To support students learning efficacy and position them for STEM careers, we must intervene early and stay the course. We know that science stereotypes strongly impact students' perceptions of scientists, and that concrete perceptions of scientists are apparent as early as the second grade (Chambers, 1983). Early intervention is key, but we must continue supporting STEM engagement across the education-to-career pipeline. Positioning diverse students for STEM careers requires constant nurturing along the developmental pathway to STEM careers.

Provide teachers with comprehensive training. Ensuring teachers are trained on contemporary practices for engaging and impactful science for early learners is key to positioning those learners for the STEM jobs of the future. Further, teachers need training in inclusive STEM to support underserved learners' STEM identities. Finally, because technologies evolve rapidly, teachers must also stay abreast of new technologies for STEM learning, be proficient at using those technologies, and comfortable integrating those technologies into sometimes congested daily lesson plans.

Communities harbor human capital and empowering those communities to advocate for necessary resources to support human capital is beneficial to individuals, communities, and society. In terms of advocating for STEM, communities may benefit from clear messaging that conveys the transformative power of STEM, how science impacts communities, and how federal and local governments are doling out resources. In speaking with parents, we have found that they were rarely informed about the bevvy of resources available to them for their young learners.

Pervasive stereotypes about STEM and a lack of access to necessary resources erodes underserved students’ love of STEM learning and persistence toward STEM careers. The imperative driving global STEM competitiveness is ripe with opportunities for those from underserved backgrounds to produce innovations that benefit our global society, so ensuring that the ecological systems in which they learn are geared toward successfully positioning them for the STEM careers of the future is key. Forging a future that is more technologically advanced, inclusive, and just will require a diverse input. Working collaboratively with stakeholders, researchers and implementation scientists can positively impact global STEM outcomes by providing and assessing best-in-class practices for increasing representation in STEM and preparing diverse learners for 21-century careers.

Research in early science education and developmental psychology has demonstrated that most children need to overcome some of their intuitive ideas of the world around them in order to comprehend scientifically accurate explanation of phenomena. However, the vast majority of this work has involved children in mainstream, North American, urban, technologically dependent populations. Recent work by Medin and his colleagues has shown how intuitive concepts are shaped by society, and how children in specific cultures (such as Native American communities) differ in their understandings of biological concepts (Bang et al., 2007). These differences are attributed to exposure to cultural values and beliefs transmitted through the discourse within the community. Interestingly, children in Native American communities were found to have more advanced understandings of living things and ecologies. Yet, disturbingly, they did less well than mainstream students in academic classroom