



**ASCD 68th Annual Conference & Exhibit Show**  
 March 16-18, 2013 | Chicago, Illinois | McCormick Place West

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"The ASCD Annual Conference changed my practice and my life!"

—Hayward Jean, Principal  
 Mellichamp Elementary School  
 Orangeburg, S.C.

#### Key Dates

**Early Bird Rate**  
 Aug. 15, 2012–Jan. 16, 2013  
 \$325 (nonmember)  
 \$259 (member)

**Regular Rate**  
 Jan. 17–March 5, 2013  
 \$425 (nonmember)  
 \$359 (member)

**On-Site Rate**  
 \$465 (nonmember)  
 \$399 (member)

#### Tweet Up

**Saturday, March 16**  
 5:30–9:00 p.m.  
 Buddy Guy's Legends  
 700 S. Wabash Ave.  
 Chicago, Ill.  
**Sponsored by Herff Jones  
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For more pricing information, including ways to combine and save with Pre-Conference Institutes, click the Register button in the right-hand corner.

# ASCD ANNUAL CONFERENCE Conference Daily

March 16–18, 2013 | Chicago, Illinois

## Changing the Story for Minorities in STEM Subjects

Laura Varlas

Months before the historic March on Washington, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called on the school children of Birmingham, Alabama, to join his Children's Crusade—a march to shine a light on the injustice of segregated schools in the United States. King's message was, if children participate, then the world will see that even children understand the difference between right and wrong. Twelve-year-old Freeman Hrabowski was one of the children who took up Dr. King's call, and he was arrested as part of the civil rights demonstration.



Fifty years later, at the opening of ASCD's 68th Annual Conference in Chicago, Hrabowski described how we can continue to live King's message by "empowering our children to speak for themselves." For Hrabowski, now in his 20th year as president of the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), this means creating structures and supports to develop the agency of students typically underrepresented in the STEM subjects. To find these students, Hrabowski didn't have to look far.

"The story for my campus was clear," said Hrabowski. "White kids did well in science and math, but the black kids

flunked out."

UMBC is changing that story with the Meyerhoff Scholars program. Now in its 25th year, Meyerhoff Scholars provides tutoring, summer programs, peer groups, and other supports to encourage all high-achieving students to persist in STEM studies, with a particular focus on the needs of black and Latino students.

Meyerhoff Scholars' continued success is, foremost, built on changing expectations for underserved students. "They didn't think we could create a climate where black and Hispanic students did as well as Asian and Indian students," Hrabowski notes. "If you've never seen it, it's challenging to believe it can happen."

High expectations are matched with a battery of student-centered approaches: building community among students, helping faculty retool teaching to start where students are and emphasize collaboration among students, giving students a role in the program's ongoing development, and building trust among students so that they are comfortable seeking extra help. "Get the best kids going to tutoring, and the other kids will follow," said Hrabowski.

Through layered supports, Hrabowski hopes to emphasize that depth, struggle, and taking time are the core qualities of math and science scholars. He advised teachers, "Don't be impressed with kids that can get it like that. If you can get it like that, you can forget it like that."

Instead, he said, our challenge as educators is to consider, "How can we turn frustration into fascination?" Hrabowski's crusade for social justice in the STEM subjects asks students to see what they can do for themselves, but matches student effort with a network of supports. Whether he knew it at the time, it's what he was marching for in Birmingham in 1963. "When I look at my campus and the diversity of high-performing students, I know that King's dream is being fulfilled."

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1703 North Beauregard St.  
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