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Dr. Bernard A. Harris Jr. named CEO of National Math and Science Initiative

The Harris Institute Founder to lead nonprofit advancing science, technology, engineering and math teaching and learning

HOUSTON (November 29, 2017)—Dr. Bernard A. Harris Jr., a philanthropist, veteran astronaut and founder of The Harris Institute has been named the new chief executive officer of the [National Math and Science Initiative](#).

“All students deserve access to rigorous math and science learning that can help them reach their potential and thrive in tomorrow’s careers,” Dr. Harris said. “I am both humbled and honored to lead the next chapter at NMSI, a respected organization I have long supported.”

Launched in 2007, NMSI has partnered with more than 1,200 schools, provided training and support for nearly 50,000 teachers, and has improved the educational experiences of more than 1.5 million students. Recently, it announced a 10-year strategy to work with other organizations to identify and eradicate “STEM deserts,” where students lack access to rigorous math and science education.

Dr. Harris was a founding member of the NMSI board of directors and will retain voting rights on the board when he assumes his role as CEO in mid-2018. He replaces Matthew Randazzo, who has been named president and CEO of the Dallas Foundation, and will remain on the NMSI board.

For the past two decades, Dr. Harris has served in leadership roles as CEO, president and chief medical officer for several companies and organizations, including Vesalius Ventures, SpaceHab, RMD Networks, and NASA. In addition, he is on the boards of the National Academy of Medicine, Houston Technology Center, the Texas Medical Center and HealthConnect. A veteran astronaut for over twenty years, he has flown two space shuttle mission, logged more than 438 hours and traveled over 7.2 million miles in space.

Dr. Harris founded The Harris Institute to empower underserved and underrepresented youth to develop and achieve their full potential through educational programs, particularly in STEM. Since 1998, THI has impacted the lives of over 50,000 students through the creation, funding and delivery of innovative programs that introduce them to careers in STEM.

THI also announced today a strategic partnership with NMSI to explore the development of student-facing programming as part of NMSI initiative to create pathways to reach more students.

“We believe there is great synergy between NMSI and THI,” said Phil Sprick, THI board member. “The work we can do together helps us scale the mission of both and reach more students and educators.”

About the Harris Institute

The Harris Institute is a 501 (c) (3), nonprofit organization founded by former NASA Astronaut Dr. Bernard A. Harris Jr. to serve socially and economically disadvantaged communities locally and across the nation striving to reach the most underserved populations in the areas of education, health and wealth. THI empowers individuals who are underserved, underrepresented and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged to recognize their potential and pursue their dreams. THI initiatives are administered by The Harris Foundation, Inc., through the creation of innovative programs. Learn more at www.theharrisinstitute.org.

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