

Archived Information

U.S. Department of Transportation Summer Transportation Institutes (STI)

Goal: Summer Transportation Institutes are four week university campus programs designed to provide middle and high school students with the opportunity to participate in a series of academic and practical experiences designed to motivate them to pursue a career in transportation.

Summary: Students are selected on the basis of interest in engineering, science, transportation, technology, academic performance, particularly in science and math, and recommendations from counselors and teachers. The program was established as the result of a 1991 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Task Force recommendation that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in partnership with South Carolina State University (SCSU) and the South Carolina Department of Transportation, develop a program to expose secondary school students to careers in transportation.

The first STI program was held in 1993 and included 20 ninth and tenth grade participants. The program has expanded to 40 universities including Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and other Institutions of Higher Education. The colleges and universities enter into agreements with SCSU to operate their respective STI programs. Funding for the Summer Transportation Institutes program is authorized in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) through the FHWA On-the-job Training/Support Services Program. Partnerships are key to the success of the STI program. In addition to FHWA's support, the institutes receive assistance from the private sector, National Urban League affiliates, community-based and professional organizations, state departments of transportation and other federal, state and local agencies.

Purpose: The Summer Transportation Institutes program is intended to encourage students to pursue and prepare for transportation careers, strengthen the link between the transportation sector and education community, and as a proactive effort to help assure the transportation industry has a sufficient, technically competent workforce to develop and manage the Nation's transportation system.

Accomplishments/Results: Since its inception, the STI program has served over 4,000 students. Thirteen of the colleges and universities have been recognized by FHWA for their leadership and creativity in exposing students to the many rewarding careers in transportation, and educating them about the importance of transportation to U.S. economic growth and the American way of life.

Plans/next 12 months: SCSU is continuing to work with colleges and universities around the country to expand the scope of the Summer Transportation Institutes program and to coordinate activities with schools already participating in the program. The STI programs are also continuing to work with the transportation industry to provide students with information and experiences that will give them a better appreciation of the value and benefits of a career in transportation.