

BETTER BUILDINGS WORKFORCE ACCELERATOR

From 2020 to 2023, SEI participated as a partner in the [Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator](#). The BBWA is a Department of Energy (DOE) initiative seeking to raise the level of building science and energy efficiency knowledge in the nation's building-related workforce. Through the BBWA, DOE engaged industry partners in activities that build interest and awareness, streamline pathways, and improve skills for people pursuing green building careers.

About the Partner

[Strategic Energy Innovations \(SEI\)](#) is an environmental nonprofit consultancy building leaders to drive sustainability solutions. SEI develops sustainability leadership pathways from elementary school to early career by partnering with schools, communities, and businesses. SEI's flagship programs, Energize Schools, Energize Colleges, Climate Corps, Climate Corps Education Outside, and Energize Careers, focus on educating and empowering participants to create thriving, resilient communities.

About the Project

From 2022 to 2023, SEI brought its award-winning Climate Corps and Energize Colleges programs to five Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) on the East Coast.

[Climate Corps](#) is a bridge-to-career fellowship program that has placed more than 800 emerging climate leaders with government, nonprofit, higher education, and private sector organizations since 2010. Johnson C. Smith University in North Carolina was the first Southeast-based institution to host a Fellow, who advanced several sustainability initiatives on campus. University of Maryland Baltimore County also served as a partner site, and Morgan State University is expected to follow suit in 2023-2024 with a Green Workforce Development Climate Corps Fellow.

"The [HBCU Energy Leadership Pathway] curriculum modules gave me valuable insight about sustainable career paths and empowered me to pursue a career in the energy industry. I learned to create and innovate, which are skills needed as we transition to clean energy."

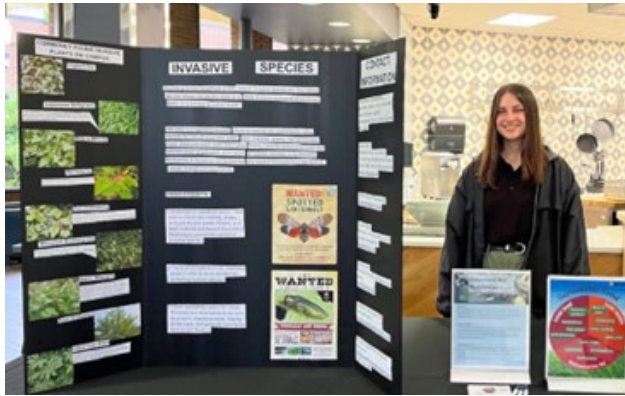
Kaleb Griffin, student at Johnson C. Smith University



HBCU Energy Leadership Pathway student presentation

AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **Partner:** SEI (Strategic Energy Innovations)
- ▶ **Project:** Building Leaders at HBCUs and Minority Serving Institutions
- ▶ **Program Location:** Charlotte, NC; Greensboro, NC; Columbia, SC; Orangeburg, SC; Baltimore, MD
- ▶ **Audience Served:** Colleges and Universities
- ▶ **Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator Focus Area(s):** Build Interest and Awareness; Improve Skills; Streamline Career Pathways



Climate Corps Fellow student presentation

[Energize Colleges](#) builds a highly qualified energy and sustainability workforce through academic learning and work experiences that leverage the campus as a living lab. Programming may include integration of sustainability in campus facilities, curriculum development, and faculty communities of practice.

SEI was selected by [E4 Carolinas](#) to develop an 8-module energy curriculum for the E4 Carolinas HBCU Energy Leadership Pathway. E4 Carolinas is a leading energy trade association in the Carolinas, and the initiative is a transformative means to promote racial equity, diversity, and inclusion in the United States energy industry. The Pathway is designed to operate in parallel with a four-year undergraduate program to provide participants with experience and credentials for a successful career in the energy industry. In Fall 2022, the Pathway was deployed at four schools, North Carolina A&T University, Johnson C. Smith University, Benedict College, and South Carolina State University.

Outcomes and Impact

20 students participated in the pilot year (2022-2023) of the HBCU Energy Leadership Pathway and E4 Carolinas plans to grow the program to include more students and schools from 2023-2024.

The collaboration with HBCUs and MSIs on the East Coast represents an expansion of SEI's established programming to new geographic areas, local economies, and schools. Through the support of partners such as [HASI Foundation](#), SEI will continue to extend the breadth and reach of its work to build diverse sustainability leaders.

"[The SEI community] sets an excellent example for how nonprofit and professional communities should support all people from different backgrounds and generations especially in the face of climate change."

Isabel Dastvan, SEI Climate Corps Fellow at
University of Maryland, Baltimore County