A Brief History of the STEM Summits in Massachusetts

In 2004, following the US Department of Education's National Summits on Mathematics and Science, Massachusetts launched the state's first STEM summit. It was also the first state summit in the nation! Organized by Krishna Vedula, UMass Lowell in concert with the MA Department of Higher Education, Barbara Libby, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Kathleen Rubin, University of MA/Amherst, it took place in Newton and was attended by over 200 people. The topic was "Fueling the Pipeline for the Massachusetts Innovation Economy." The focus was to bring the many stakeholders together to define and discuss STEM issues confronting the Commonwealth.

In 2005, STEM Summit II, the focus was on "Building the Community" and the ramifications of the current STEM conditions were explored. The summit moved to Sturbridge, where it has remained, to involve the entire state more conveniently.

In 2006, "Securing the Future: Closing the STEM Achievement Gap" proposed practices and programs that can be the solution.

In 2007, "Accelerating Forward" showcased how far MA had come with a variety of strands, including: *Legislation and Advocacy, Working with Data, Engineering for K12 Students, Wingspread-Using IT to Teach Math and Science, Mathematics: Foundation for STEM, National Advocacy for STEM, Building Blocks for STEM Change, Clean Energy Growth and New Career Opportunities in Massachusetts, and Understanding Factors that Encourage Career Choices in the Life Sciences.*

Following this Summit, a brief indicating the continued urgency to improve STEM education and concept papers to support the strands were posted. A "virtual summit," for those who were unable to attend and those present who could not attend all the sessions, was posted as well. By 2007, approximately 600 people participated in STEM Summit IV, again representing all the key stakeholder groups in the state.

In 2008, at STEM Summit V: "Implementing the Plan," a landscape study of MA was discussed, the second step in moving toward the Commonwealth's STEM plan. The seven strands once again reflected successful and promising practices in the four disciplines. Presentation materials are available on the website: www.massachusetts.edu/STEM.