



**Chemical Industry  
Council of Illinois**

To: Honorable Members of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus

From: Mark Biel, CEO  
Chemical Industry Council of Illinois (CICI)  
[mbiel@cicil.net](mailto:mbiel@cicil.net) or 217-201-5720

**RE: Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU) Scholarship Opportunity for STEM students. DEADLINE TO APPLY - February 15**

I am asking for your assistance in spreading the word about STEM scholarships available for young students pursuing majors in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). I apologize for the short notice, as we just received notice that many opportunities still exist for potential students.

Our sister organization - the American Chemistry Council (ACC) along with the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE), The Chemours Company and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Week Foundation - announced the chemical industry's first collaborative equity, diversity and inclusion initiative aimed at creating pathways for more underrepresented groups to enter and succeed in the chemical industry. The result is the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative (FOSSI).

FOSSI is the collaborative effort of manufacturers, supply chain partners and other stakeholders to fund scholarships, create internships, and facilitate mentoring and leadership training for students majoring in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

**FOSSI brings together the entire chemical industry to make a significant impact on the future of the industry. With an ambitious first year goal of underwriting 150 STEM Scholars at an investment of \$7.2 million, supporters have raised \$4.6 million as of December 2020 with additional multi-year pledges of more than \$10 million toward the scholarships.**

ACC and our ICIC members recognize the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion programs like FOSSI to help build a cohesive and united workforce which enhances economic growth for all businesses and individuals. FOSSI's initial focus is to increase the number of minorities in the STEM workforce by providing scholarships to students pursuing STEM degrees at HBCUs and connecting these students to internships, leadership development, and mentoring opportunities at participating companies.

Our industry's success depends on innovation led by a bright and talented workforce. We are respectfully requesting your help in raising awareness about the scholarship program and ensuring that all individuals have opportunities to succeed in the chemistry industry.

The American Chemistry Council is a national trade association representing chemicals and plastics manufacturers in the United States, including member companies in Illinois. Over 96 percent of all manufactured goods are directly touched by the business of chemistry, making this industry an essential part of every facet of our nation's economy.

**Headquarters**

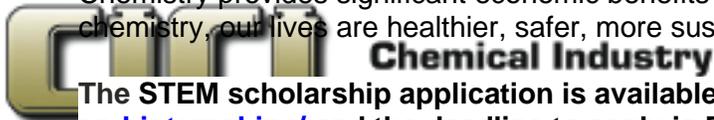
1400 E. TOUHY AVENUE, SUITE 110, DES PLAINES, IL 60018 • TEL: (847) 544-5995 • FAX: (847) 544-5999

**Springfield**

400 W. MONROE, SUITE 205, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704 • TEL: (217) 522-5805 • FAX: (217) 522-5815

**Website:** [www.cicil.net](http://www.cicil.net)

Chemistry provides significant economic benefits in every state including Illinois. Thanks to chemistry, our lives are healthier, safer, more sustainable, and productive than before.



The STEM scholarship application is available at <https://www.hbcuweek.org/scholarships-and-internships/> and the deadline to apply is February 15th, 2021.

Again, thank you for your attention in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me, Mark Biel, at [mbiel@cicil.net](mailto:mbiel@cicil.net) or 217-201-5720.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark C. Biel'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name.

Mark Biel, CEO  
Chemical Industry Council of Illinois

**Headquarters**

1400 E. TOUHY AVENUE, SUITE 110, DES PLAINES, IL 60018 • TEL: (847) 544-5995 • FAX: (847) 544-5999

**Springfield**

400 W. MONROE, SUITE 205, SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704 • TEL: (217) 522-5805 • FAX: (217) 522-5815

**Website:** [www.cicil.net](http://www.cicil.net)