

## Education & Workforce Principles

### ***Promoting Domestic Skilled Labor***

Hispanics and African Americans, combined, account for less than 5% of the U.S. engineering workforce. Compete America believes that minority students are an untapped resource for the next generation of engineers and wants to foster that opportunity. Support for institutions that traditionally serve these students should be bolstered through fees already paid into the system when companies need to hire foreign nationals because of a lack of qualified domestic candidates. H-1B visa fees are paid by companies to support education and workforce related activities. The fees are currently allocated in the following manner:

- 50%: available to the Secretary of Labor for workforce training.
- 30%: available to the Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) for scholarships for low-income students enrolled in a program of study leading to a degree in mathematics, engineering or computer science.
- 10%: available to the Director of the National Science Foundation until expended to carry out a direct or matching grant program to support private-public partnerships in K-12 education.
- 5%: available to the Secretary of Homeland Security for use related to petitions for certain immigrants.
- 5%: available to the Secretary of Labor until expended for decreasing the processing time for applications.

Compete America believes that it is critically important that minority serving institutions of higher education have the kinds of resources needed to increase their capacity to better serve students seeking to major in a STEM related discipline. We hope that Congress will move to review the current fee allocations and allow a percentage of the visa fees to be redirected to scholarships for current NSF programs aimed at students in STEM fields from minority serving institutions.

### ***Assisting with Returning Military***

Many of our armed forces personnel enlist for service right out of high school and have no formal post-high school education. Their military occupations often require that they be trained with highly technical skills that are in demand in the civilian workplace. Separating military personnel need to be better able to translate and align their military skills expertise to allow for a more rapid and smoother transition to employment in the civilian sector. The companies that comprise Compete America have real needs for skilled workers across a variety of technical occupations. The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) provides an important opportunity for our separating military personnel to better understand what types of skills will be important for them to attain to secure family wage jobs in a technical workforce, allowing for easier transitions into civilian employment. We hope the Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs will review their current TAP program to incorporate a technical skills assessment for our exiting military personnel.