As a part of their Education & Public Outreach efforts, a consortium of NAI lead teams have funded the development of a curriculum to share the excitement of NASA's astrobiology research with middle and high school students. This curriculum, referred to as Astrobiology in the Secondary Classrooms (ASC) allows students and teachers to see the connections among concepts in astronomy, biology, chemistry, geoscience, physics, mathematics, and ethics through hands-on activities that address national standards. The ASC development project began in 2004 and is now entering the field-testing phase via professional development workshops and other
routes of dissemination. Using a network of minority-serving institutions, the ASC staff seeks to enable middle and high school teachers across the US to include astrobiology-related activities in their classrooms, many of which contain high numbers of students historically underrepresented in science careers. A critical partner during the field-testing phase is the NASA Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Aerospace Academy (SEMAA). Partnerships with SEMAA sites across the nation allow for built-in diversity when field-testing and developing the ASC curriculum both in formal and informal educational settings.

The goal of this project is to establish a successful curriculum for creating the scientists of tomorrow by bringing powerful technical tools and current scientific data into an interdisciplinary science curriculum focused on reaching all students. Accomplishing this goal will involve assessing the impact these crosscutting activities have on student attitudes toward continuing science classes at increasingly higher levels and providing astrobiology-related professional development opportunities for teachers across the US.