In this oral history interview, Kenneth Alston discusses his educational experiences at West End Elementary and Emmett Scott High School (York County, South Carolina), Friendship Junior College (Rock Hill, South Carolina), St. Augustine's College (Raleigh, North Carolina), and Howard University, from which he earned his doctorate in chemistry. Alston describes his time spent with the National Institute of Health where he worked under two Nobel Prize winning chemists, Christian B. Anfinsen and Max Ferdinand Perutz, and his teaching career at Allen University, Benedict College, and the University of South Carolina. Dr. Kenneth Alston, an educator and research chemist, was born in Rock Hill, South Carolina in 1951, and has four siblings. Tom Crosby interviewed Dr. Kenneth Alston at his office on the campus of Allen University, Columbia, South Carolina, on May 15, 2009. Interview covers Alston's education at West End Elementary School (of Rock Hill, S.C.) from 1958 to 1964 and at Emmett Scott High School (of Rock Hill, S.C.) from 1965 to 1969.
Tom Crosby: Today is May 15, 2009 and I’m in the office of Dr. Kenneth Alston at Allen University. Where were you born, sir?

Kenneth Alston: I was born in Rock Hill, South Carolina, which is a part of York County, South Carolina in 1951.

TC: Okay. What was the name of your elementary school?

KA: West End Elementary School. It was located pretty much in the same neighborhood where I was born. We could walk to elementary school.

TC: I see. So you didn’t have to walk three and four miles to school?

KA: No, un-uh.

TC: I see. Okay, do you have brothers and sisters?

KA: Yes, I have three other brothers and one sister, two older brothers, one older sister, and one younger brother. So I’m the fourth child.

TC: Okay. I forgot to ask you something else. Actually I need to know if you have a middle name.

KA: No, no middle name.

TC: No middle name, okay. Now you started to school in ’5—

KA: I believe ’57, ’58.

TC: Somewhere like that?

KA: Un-huh.

TC: The reason I asked that question, you went to school during the segregated time?

KA: Yes. All of my elementary school occurred during the time of segregation. However, in 1965 when we moved into—

TC: Desegregated period?
KA: Yeah, when we moved into the desegregated period and when we moved from elementary to high school, when I started the ninth grade that was the period of time when other students my age, some of them started to attend some of the white schools.

TC: Right. Now so in elementary school, I guess this is first through seventh?

KA: Eighth, first through eighth.

TC: First through eighth, okay, all the teachers and administrators were black, African-American?

KA: Yes, yes.

TC: Okay. How would you describe the teachers in general?

KA: Well, I mean basically we’ve always felt that we had excellent teachers. The reading, writing, and math components of our early childhood education was such that when we went to high school students from our neighborhood, you know, had a great impact on the, you know, academic structure at the high school. We were pretty much, you know, known for being very competitive and being very intellectual students.

TC: So the teachers prepared you well?

KA: Yes.

TC: Do you remember any of the let’s say maybe teaching strategies that teachers may have used in general?

KA: Well, that would be, you know, somewhat kindly odd for me to go back to but I can point out a couple of things. One, our instructions were very disciplined. We were given homework and I think pretty much all of our classes at some point, if it was an English class, at some point everybody in the class had to read out loud, you know, some of the information in the textbook. And in all the other classes at some point students were called to the board to work problems. And that’s something that you don’t find a lot of today.

TC: Right and a lot of drilling went on too, didn’t it?

KA: That’s correct, yeah.

TC: Yeah, drills.

KA: Un-huh.

TC: In spelling?

KA: Spelling, yeah.

TC: I guess reading as well.

KA: Oh, yeah.

TC: Constant reading.

KA: Yeah.

TC: Yeah.
KA: We had plays. We had talent shows. We had science fairs.

TC: I see. How would you describe the teachers in terms of their sincerity?

KA: They were very sincere and another thing that I learned when I went back and started to work on the, you know, project that perhaps we’ll be talking a little bit about later on, the Victorian history of the high school that I attended, I found that the, all the teachers that taught us either got, either graduated from Allen University, Benedict College, South Carolina State, although I don’t think it was called South Carolina State back then, Johnson C. Smith, or North Carolina Central, which had a different name back in those days.

TC: I see. Now you mentioned those schools, those colleges, do you have any comment as to why you mentioned those colleges, you know, Allen, Benedict, and so forth?

KA: Well, I think it basically, you know, showed the contributions that historically black colleges and universities made toward the education of, you know—

TC: Of the schools.

KA: Of the school system. I mean basically, you know—

TC: And evidently I guess you would say that they had strong teacher preparation.

KA: Yes, you could tell that, you know, and it appeared as if all those HBCUs at that time were more involved in teacher education than perhaps they may be today. Because, you know, teachers really had a consistent, you know, structural, you know, message throughout the entire, you know, years that we were in school. And another thing that I forgot to mention was there was also I think beginning in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade where they had combination classes where advanced students, say if you were in the sixth grade and your skills were at a certain level, you could be in a class with some seventh grade students. If you were in the seventh grade and your skills were advanced, you could be in some classes with some of the eighth grade students. So that was kind of unique.

TC: I see. Now that was a combination of one grade, students in one grade integrating with another grade?

KA: Yeah, a higher grade.

TC: That enabled more challenging or just?

KA: Well, I think.

TC: They could just move on?

KA: Yeah.

TC: Not stay.

KA: Exactly, it promoted, you know, enhanced learning ability with, you know, those kids who had the ability to, you know.
TC: Handle that at the next level?
KA: Yeah.

TC: Okay, that’s interesting, yeah. Now I guess you would say that teachers were very dedicated?
KA: Oh, yes. You know, teachers they would, you know, not only interact with you one-on-one after school if they had to but, you know, teachers interacted with our parents. You know, calls were made, letters were sent home, things of that nature, not only in cases where there may have been a problem with a student but in cases where you were doing well.

TC: Motivation?
KA: Exactly.

TC: How about those students that, how did the students deal with those students who, how did the teachers deal with those students who may not have been as, may have lacked some skills or didn’t grasp the material as quickly as some of the other students?
KA: Well, that’s an interesting question. One of the things that we found was all the students didn’t necessarily, you know, pass on from grade to grade. Some of the years in elementary school I can remember that, you know, we were in some of our classes with some students who were, who we knew were much older than us.

TC: Had to have been some reason or reasons?
KA: Yeah, and I think back in those days it was called being held back. So, you know, there were some students, you know, who didn’t for whatever reason, you know, were unable to meet the educational challenge and successfully, you know, pass from class to class.

TC: They didn’t socially promote them?
KA: Right, right. And, you know, back in those days you didn’t have things that were involved in trying to find out, you know, behavioral problems associated with a particular student at that time. But we knew something was going on because, you know, these students they would come and they would try but, you know, they just had some problems in being able to succeed. But they were not treated any differently from any of us and the teachers always did their best to try and, you know.

TC: So you could tell that the teachers cared?
KA: Right.

TC: For all the students?
KA: Yeah.

TC: Yeah. I have, if I may, an interesting point to add to this like when I was teaching high school. When I was there were homogenously grouped and I think the same was true when I went back there to work. It’s a personal reference and I know that but I was proud of it because I found those kids who were in those so-called slower sections, on tests they
came up almost as well as those that were advanced because it’s how you deal with them, yeah, and strategies that you use.

KA: We didn’t have, except for that combination class that I was talking about, you know, everybody was grouped in, you know.

TC: It was heterogeneous they call it?

KA: Right, yeah.

TC: Different abilities in the same class.

KA: Right, in class.

TC: Performance should I say, yeah. Then the name of your high school?

KA: The high school’s name was Emmett Scott High School and our college symbol was a rattler.

TC: Rattler, yeah. If I may, do you know anything about for whom they named that school or why they named it Emmett?

KA: Yeah, Emmett Scott was, if I recall correctly, was a black-

TC: Educator?

KA: No, he was actually involved in the Navy and I think he was one of the black soldiers who was responsible for some success in the Civil War down in the Charleston area. I think he was responsible for—

TC: Some achievement?

KA: Yeah.

TC: During the Civil War?

KA: Yeah.

TC: So he was from that area or you’re not sure?

KA: No, I don’t think he was from that area but and then he held some military offices in some of the administrations of the, you know, government.

TC: I see. The Confederate government?

KA: No, the Union.

TC: Union, oh, I see. So he fought on the Union side?

KA: Yes.

TC: I see. Okay.

KA: I don’t think he was from the South but I’m not really sure.

TC: I see. Okay. Now how would you describe the teachers at Emmett Scott?

KA: Again we had excellent teachers, you know. Our high school was, you know, a lively place both from the academic standpoint and a social standpoint. There was very little—
TC: Discipline?
KA: Well, discipline was always—
TC: Discipline problems, very little discipline?
KA: Yeah, very little discipline problems. You know, students were, you know, real aggressive about learning.
TC: Teachers.
KA: Teachers I think, I don’t remember— TC:
TC: Had high expectations?
KA: Oh, yeah. I don’t remember us having a library in elementary school but I do remember us having a library in high school. We also, you know, had nurses on staff, counselors on staff.
TC: You had vocational courses?
KA: There were a couple back, one was like home economics and another one was shop where students learned carpentry and things of that nature.
TC: Auto mechanics?
KA: No.
TC: Didn’t have that?
KA: Un-uh.
TC: Okay. Now you went on to college?
KA: Well, when I left Emmett Scott I didn’t go to college right away. I sat our for I think about a year and then I came, I went to Washington D.C. to live with one of my aunts, worked in a hospital up there, saved a little bit of money and then came back and I began to attend Friendship Junior College. That was also located in Rock Hill, South Carolina.
TC: Okay, before we go into that college area, let me go back to the high school level for a moment. Now the science area at Emmet Scott, did it play a role in your eventually majoring in chemistry?
KA: No, no, because when I was in high school actually my plans at that point was to become a neurosurgeon.
TC: I see.
KA: But we did have, you know, good science classes as well as good math classes across the board. But I really, you know, had medicine on my mind when I was in high school. Now another important point that I forgot to mention was when I was in high school I recall we only had I believe two white instructors to come to teach in our high school during the period when I was there.
TC: Okay now this was what years?
KA: I believe my junior and senior year.

TC: Okay, those years would be?

KA: Sixty-eight and ’69.

TC: Sixty-eight and ’69?

KA: Un-huh.

TC: Okay, so you had two white instructors there at that time?

KA: Right. I remember one taught French foreign language and the other one taught history, both females.

TC: Okay, I think that the last part of the initial, the beginning of desegregation.

KA: Well, it actually began in ’65 during my freshman year in high school but I don’t believe we had any white instructors then.

TC: So what went on in ’65 that related to desegregation?

KA: Our black kids went to white institutions. And some of the black instructors—

TC: Went to white institutions?

KA: Went to white institutions to teach. But none of the white instructors came to the black schools to teach, at least not the black high schools.

TC: Oh, ( ).

KA: Yeah, it took two years for that to happen.

TC: So some of the black teachers went over to the white schools.

KA: Right.

TC: I guess elementary and high schools?

KA: Yeah, more than likely those who were, you know, certified, right.

TC: Yeah. I think in Union I know there were two white persons came to work at Union. I’m not sure, I’ll have to ask about that, was there a point in which some black teachers went over to Union High before the students actually went, and I’m not sure. Okay, so I guess then you liked biology in high school, more so than chemistry at that point?

KA: No, I really liked, you know, the physical sciences and the mathematics more. I enjoyed problem solving.

TC: I see. So how did this enter into the neuro, neuro what?

KA: Neurosurgery?

TC: Neurosurgery.

KA: Well, you know, dissection played a role in that, okay. We used to catch insects and frogs and things of that nature.
TC: For lab you did?
KA: Yeah.
TC: I see.
KA: For little kinds of, you know, dissecting on them and I think the neurosurgery was more associated with that being one of the areas that required the most skill.
TC: So you wanted that challenging area?
KA: Yeah.
TC: I see. So I’m just wondering though if maybe you may have seen something that actually was very fascinating with you with reference to let’s say the nerves, nervous system.
KA: Probably so, yeah.
TC: Some film you may have seen.
KA: Could have been. I just don’t remember at that time what it was but I also knew at that particular period of time that there were either zero black neurosurgeons at that time or very few.
TC: I see. Okay. Now there’s one area that we haven’t talked about and that is the area of athletics. My high school was very good in football and track. Baseball, basketball was not among the number one you might say. And we played, Sims High School, which was located in Union, played Emmett Scott.
KA: Right.
TC: I see. So do you remember any of the games between Sims and Emmett Scott? I’m not sure they were still playing at that time.
KA: Oh, yeah, not in particular but I do remember some of our biggest games were against Sims—
TC: Carver.
KA: Carver.
TC: Sterling.
KA: Sterling and I think Finley.
TC: And Granard.
KA: I don’t think we played them.
TC: Granard, G-R-A-N-A-R-D. Okay. So you don’t remember any particular game between Sims and Emmett Scott?
KA: No but I think, I do know that all of our games were played in the stadium that currently plays the major high school games in Rock Hill today. The stadium bordered our neighborhood or the neighborhood that I grew up in. It was a stadium that some of the triple A baseball teams used to play in. So for our school I think we may have had,
you know, one of the best arenas for football to occur in than, you know, most of the high schools.

**TC:** Okay now are you referring to Emmet Scott’s stadium or the city stadium?

**KA:** The city stadium, right.

**TC:** When Emmett Scott had games, football games, what night of the week were those games played? You don’t remember?

**KA:** I really don’t remember but I don’t believe it was Friday night. I don’t believe it was.

**TC:** Ours were Thursday night.

**KA:** Yeah, I think so because I always remember that the next day coming back to school there was a big discussion about it.

**TC:** Sleepy and so forth.

**KA:** Yeah.

**TC:** And in Rock Hill the white school there, the high school, they played on Friday night?

**KA:** Right, yeah.

**TC:** That’s the way it was in Union.

**KA:** That’s how it was in Rock Hill. And we also at that time, we had good football teams. We had good basketball teams. But, you know, I don’t think we were as dominant as let’s say Sims or, you know, Carver. But, you know—

**TC:** And then things change, you know, occasionally too. One school might be a little better than others or down a few years or something like that.

**KA:** Yeah. Plus we didn’t play that many games. I don’t think, you know, when you look at the number of football games the high schools play today, I don’t think we played ten games.

**TC:** I see. Do you recall any of your players going on to play professional football?

**KA:** I remember one. His name was, his nickname, we used to call him Monk and his last name was Hardin. He passed away recently. But he left— **TC:** Hardin is H-A-R-D-I-N or I-N?

**KA:** Un-huh. He left Emmett Scott and went to South Carolina State. He performed well down there and he was drafted by one of the NFL teams but he never really excelled in the NFL.

**TC:** He didn’t? I see. Is he alive now?
KA: No, he passed away a couple of years ago.
TC: I see. Okay so you finished high school and then you stayed out of here?
KA: Went to work, yeah, came back to Friendship.
TC: Friendship Junior College?
KA: Yeah.
TC: Which is located in?
KA: In Rock Hill.
TC: It was in Rock Hill?
KA: Yeah. It was next to the church. It was a church supported school, Baptist supported, and the church next to it was called Mount Prospect Baptist Church, which is still located there and that’s the church that I was initially baptized in, my sister and myself. My older cousin, who I grew up with, she went to Friendship and from Friendship she transferred to St. Augustine’s College in Raleigh, North Carolina. So when I decide to continue my education that’s the same route that I took.
TC: I see. About how many students were there when you were there would you say?
KA: I know it was less than five hundred.
TC: I see.
KA: But they had a good basketball team and, you know, in a lot of ways, you know, Friendship didn’t have as much as the high school had because some of the classrooms were held in trailers and you can imagine trying to have a lab in a trailer. And at that point in time, you know, Friendship had perhaps started on its state of decline, which ultimately it ended up closing down in the late ‘70s or early ‘80s.
TC: So what happened to that campus?
KA: It’s still there. I don’t know if I’m calling this right but the Baptist Association, Sandy River Association, they currently own that property and they’ve been trying over the years to develop a community center/museum because Friendship has gained national and to some degree international fame from a group of civil rights activists called the Friendship Nine. And so, you know, they’re still active in trying to— TC: Now who are the Friendship Nine?
KA: The Friendship Nine were nine individuals who decided back in the early ‘60s during the civil rights period to sit in at one of the white restaurants in Rock Hill, South Carolina. And they eventually were arrested and had to serve thirty days at on what they called back at that time the chain gang.
TC: Did they actually serve?
KA: Oh, yeah, they actually served.
TC: They did?
KA: Un-huh.
TC: Are some of those persons alive now?
KA: Oh, yeah, some of them, a few of them are still alive and I think the slogan, I don’t know if I’m getting this right but a slogan similar to no crime, no fine, or no fine, no crime, came out of that particular effort.

TC: Are some of the persons of that nine, are some of them still living in Rock Hill or do you know?
KA: Yep, some of them are still living in the Rock Hill-Charlotte area. Recently the city acknowledged and proclaimed a historical sign in front of that store in their particular name.

TC: I saw a TV program, did you see it where the white man who had been, done negative things towards them, he apologized?
KA: Right, yeah.

TC: Okay, so after Friendship then you went to college?
KA: I went to St. Augustine’s College in Raleigh, North Carolina. Although I had sat out a year, when I came back to Friendship, I spent one year and two summers at Friendship and at that particular time they allowed me to get back on track. So when I transferred to St. Augustine’s I transferred in as a junior and only had to stay there for two years.

TC: I see. Now at Friendship you had small classes?
KA: Yep.

TC: So the instructors knew you well?
KA: Right, we had small classes and my chemistry instructor and biology instructor I believe at that point in time were white instructors. And for the first time in my educational career a foreign language teacher was African.

TC: What language was that?
KA: French.

TC: French, I see. Okay. And at St. Augustine’s you majored in?
KA: Majored in chemistry.

TC: Chemistry, okay. How would you describe that school, the atmosphere?
KA: Very serious atmosphere, very competitive, you know, essentially the students were very or the educational environmental was very similar to my high school environment where you had highly intellectual individuals in all your science classes and it really, you know, helped motivate you to study and do well.

TC: Right, there were high expectations again?
KA: Yeah, because again—

TC: A caring environment?
KA: A caring environment.

TC: Nurturing.

KA: And the fact that, you know, teachers were constantly calling on students to answer questions, to solve problems. And, you know, if you had any kind of self esteem or integrity back in those days you didn’t want to be caught too many times unprepared. Whereas, you know, you find in today’s classes you have a situation like that and students come in unprepared and you call on them two or three times over a week then sometimes issues occur.

TC: Yeah. So you’re talking about firsthand experience? You are teaching at Allen University and you are teaching chemistry.

KA: Yes.

TC: Yeah. And so the atmosphere is not the same?

KA: No, this atmosphere changed and.— TC:

And it’s not only here.

KA: Right. I mean it’s also in some of the majority of institutions. I was talking with a friend of my earlier this morning who indicated that she had read in one of the local newspapers where there was some student suing the University of South Carolina for grade inflation.

TC: Really?

KA: Yeah. So I hadn’t seen that article.

TC: A student?

KA: Yes.

TC: Suing for grade inflation?

KA: Un-huh.

TC: Because her grade wasn’t what she or you don’t know?

KA: I don’t know the contents of the article but, you know.

TC: In today’s paper you say?

KA: No, she said in some paper she had read recently.

TC: I see.

KA: Yeah, so I’m going to try and find that article. But I mean, you know, it has existed in other schools as well where, you know, students find out if you’re not learning information at the level that other students are, then when it comes to competing against those students in the real world, you run into some obstacles. And in some cases, you know, those obstacles determine, you know, your ability to move to the next level.
TC: Right. Okay now there are some programs here at Allen that are sponsored by the federal government and I understand that those programs are bringing in some students who are doing okay, and going on to programs during the summer and so forth.

KA: Yeah, now here again, I’m just finishing my second year here at Allen.

TC: Yeah. Excuse me, you place a lot of emphasis on lab work I believe, don’t you.

KA: Yes. Well, you know, and—

TC: And research activities?

KA: And, you know, the. But I have seen since arriving here in the spring 2007 that the ability of the students are increasing. Now whether or not Allen is going to be able to sustain that, is—

TC: Another question.

KA: Is another question because I spent ten years across the street at Benedict College and I was able to see an ebb and flow in the student’s educational ability. And when I left Benedict and went back to St. Augustine’s I spent thirteen years there and saw the same process, an ebb and a flow in the educational ability of the students as well as the commitment on the faculty. You know, that every time it seemed to me like a change in administration, you would get a decrease in the ability of the students. So I think one of the challenges, you know, that black institutions have is being able to sustain and build on—

TC: What you have at the time.

KA: Yeah, yeah.

TC: Right. Now okay after Friendship, no, after St. Augustine’s, you went on to graduate school?

KA: Yep, went on to graduate school at Howard University and got my Ph.D. in chemistry there. And then from there I went out and spent four years at the National Institute of Health. I worked on a research project that was associated with finding a cure for sickle cell disease.

TC: Oh, did you?

KA: And I think I’m probably one of few African Americans who have ever worked under two Nobel Prize winners in medicine and chemistry.

TC: Who were they?

KA: I worked under Chris Atkinson at the NIH. He was the chief of our lab.

TC: What lab was this, sickle cell?

KA: No, it was at that point it fell under this section of NIH was arthritis, kidney disease type of section. And then my work there led to me spending a summer over in Cambridge, England working with a scientist by the name, I was at the Medical Research
Council Laboratory over there working under Max Perutz. He won the Nobel Prize for delineating the crystal structure of hemoglobin.

**TC:** Oh, really?

**KA:** Yeah.

**TC:** So who are those two persons again?

**KA:** Chris Atkinson.

**TC:** In what area?

**KA:** I think his was more or less in medicine. He was responsible for, he shared a Nobel Prize with another scientist for explaining how rival nuclease could refold after it had been denatured.

**TC:** I see. And the other one was?

**KA:** Max Perutz.

**TC:** Yeah. And he did the crystal—

**KA:** Structure of hemoglobin.

**TC:** Of hemoglobin?

**KA:** Yeah.

**TC:** I see.

**KA:** So I went there, came back, I got an assistant professorship at the University of South Carolina in Allendale Salkehatchie campus. I spent a year there and then I came up to the main campus here at Columbia back on a post doc doing some research in their NMR facility because at that point I had become an expert in making what’s referred to as artificial hemoglobin. That being, you know, hemoglobin has four groups in it called heme group and the heme group is composed of this organic component called porphyrin and inside this porphyrin you have an iron atom. So I had become an expert in taking out this heme group and putting back in another porphyrin group that had a different type of metal in the center of it. And that would cause the, you know, the hemoglobin to behave in some ways or in some confirmations that, you know, people couldn’t study in other conditions.

**TC:** I see. So what was the significance of this?

**KA:** To sickle cell?

**TC:** Yeah.

**KA:** Well, during my post doc I found by putting nickel in the porphyrin, inside the porphyrin.

**TC:** Nickel?

**KA:** Nickel, taking the native iron heme group out of sickle hemoglobin and putting in the nickel porphyrin that this nickel sickle hemoglobin—

**TC:** Port is P-O-R-?
KA: P-H-Y-R-I-N.
TC: R-I-N?
KA: Un-huh.
TC: Okay.
KA: When you had this nickel put in the sickle hemoglobin, and mind you there are a lot of purification processes that were involved in getting, you know, blood from somebody with sickle cell disease, purifying it to get the major component, taking the heme group out, and then putting another heme group back in it, purifying it, you know, to get a purified, you know, product. But one of the things that this artificial hemoglobin did with nickel in it, it locked the sickle hemoglobin in the confirmation that it manifest the disease in it, in the sense that—
TC: The structure?
KA: Yeah, it locked it in what we call the deoxy conformational state. That’s the conformational state where the hemoglobin in those individuals with sickle cell plumarizes or form these long strands, as they’re called, and distorts the—
TC: Shape?
KA: The shape of the red blood cells. So here we had a hemoglobin that not only, an artificial hemoglobin that not only locked the hemoglobin in that confirmation, but it did so in the presence of air.
TC: I see.
KA: So you could study it, you know, without having to worry about removing oxygen from it. That had been a big problem with the native hemoglobin with the iron because the only way you could get the iron hemoglobin in the deoxy state would be to remove all the oxygen and just know how difficult it is to do some of these experiments.
TC: So it gives you another study process.
KA: Right, right.
TC: This is really interesting. Okay, so do you have any additional comments you’d like to make about your educational career or your educational process in general?
KA: Well, I just, you know, one of the goals that I had, after I had achieved what I consider to be some major advances in science, what I wanted, my goal was to come back to one or to a HBCU and develop students that they would go on and achieve more than I have achieved. And I try and emphasize to a lot of people who just don’t understand or don’t realize that one thing that has not been accomplished by African Americans is that there has not been an African American to win a Nobel Prize in any of the sciences. Now here today we have an African American president. The thing about the African American president is he doesn’t come from a historically black college or university. And one of the ways that I feel like HBCU’s can legitimize themselves, okay, is if they can commit to creating the kind of science programs that will ultimately lead to producing these kinds of individuals, okay. When you talk about Nobel Prize, most African Americans the only thing they think about is Nobel Peace. They don’t realize
Nobel’s in chemistry and physics, in medicine, okay, and mathematics. They don’t realize what achieving that kind of accomplishment means from an international standpoint. And so that’s been the main reason why I wanted to come back and work at a HBCU.

**TC:** Well, I can see that you have put in a lot of time and how the students come by and once I was here I think it was a student said that he had not done his work or whatever, anyway, I observed that you are actually involved in them doing their work and their research projects. And it seems to be paying off because the number of students that are going off for summers for programs.

**KA:** That’s correct.

**TC:** And evidently they feel comfortable in applying.

**KA:** Feel confident and I always believe that what you will see in the next several years is not only has there been an increase in the number of students who are going off doing summer internships, but you’re going to see in the next coming years more students going off to graduate and professional schools and being successful there as well.

**TC:** Would you like to mention maybe one or several schools that students are going for internships this summer 2009?

**KA:** We have two students who are going to the University of California-Berkley in two different laboratories.

**TC:** Same school?

**KA:** Same school and, you know, Berkley is a top tier research institution. We have another student who’s going back to Furman University. He did an internship there last year. We have another student who’s going to the University of Iowa. And we also have a student that will be doing some work at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

**TC:** Several students are going on to graduate school. You may not know who they are.

**KA:** No, I don’t. I know that they have had some in the past.

**TC:** Yeah, Mercy Williams, she’s going to graduate school and a student from is it ( )? He’s going on to nursing I believe.

**KA:** Okay.

**TC:** Yeah, to South University.

**KA:** Okay, I hadn’t heard that.

**TC:** Okay, if you don’t have any additional comments, I’d like to thank you for this session. It’s been very informative. I can see that you have done a lot of work in your educational career. So again, thanks very much.
KA: Thank you for the opportunity.
End of interview