Policy careers in STEM: Applying your Skills to Foster Change

When people think of STEM careers, the most common domains are academia and industry. Some graduates will use a STEM foundation to pursue advanced studies in professions like medicine and law. Another potential career path available to STEM professionals is STEM policy. Policymakers with science and engineering backgrounds apply their technical and analytical skills to help in the development of government policy. I’ll talk about my path to serving as a science policy fellow at the National Institutes of Health. I’ll also describe the best known science policy program, the AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellowship program, and discuss some of the professions to which a background in STEM policy can lead.

Bio: Stephen (Steve) Jett is a Staff Member at Sandia National Laboratories. There he manages the microscopy resources of the Center for Integrated Nanotechnologies. Facilities management, user training, project collaboration, subject matter expert and policy development are parts of his role. Prior to working at Sandia Steve served as a AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow at the National Cancer Institute, leading imaging informatics projects. Steve worked as research faculty at the UNM Health Sciences Center, studying nucleoprotein complex structure and gene regulation, and also served as the Director of the HSC Electron Microscopy Facility. Steve’s training is in Biomedical and Computer Engineering, Molecular Biology and Structural Biology. Steve was a Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Göttingen, Germany.