



Engineering at Maryland by Providing Opportunities With Research Reactor (EMPOWRR)

PI: Amber Johnson,
University of Maryland, College
Park

Collaborators: Stephen Egarievwe - Morgan State University
Uchenna Ezibe - American Nuclear Society

Program: University Reactor Sharing and Outreach

ABSTRACT:

The University of Maryland Radiation Facilities (UMDRF) will increase the access to, and usage of, the facilities by students and teachers who come from traditionally underrepresented communities through our Engineering at Maryland by Providing Opportunities With Research Reactor (EMPOWRR) program. EMPOWRR will include a partnership with Morgan State University (MSU), the largest HBCU in the state of Maryland, to offer their students the opportunity to participate in the UMDRF's Reactor Operator Training Program and to use the facility for research projects in the MEGR 490/491 Senior Design Project class. Faculty from MSU will also be invited to help lead the Reactor Operator Training classes, offering them the opportunity to gain knowledge and training materials that can be used to develop a nuclear education program at Morgan State.

Additionally, we plan to broaden our reach by co-sponsoring an educator workshop with the American Nuclear Society (ANS) at the American Association of Physics Teachers Summer Meeting slated for Washington DC in 2025. This workshop provides educators with a unique professional development opportunity where they are led through a nuclear science and technology learning curriculum, are exposed to engaging STEM activities they can share with their classrooms, and are allowed to see these concepts in action through hands-on exercises and a visit to an operating nuclear reactor. This will help teachers gain the knowledge and resources to effectively teach about nuclear science and nuclear energy, potentially impacting thousands of students.