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How can representatives of the construction industry affect STEM education strategy?

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Francis Colantonio,
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Holliston, MA Chairman and CEO Francis Colantonio of Colantonio Inc. was one of two Massachusetts industry representatives recently invited to attend the first-of-its-kind State-Federal Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education Summit hosted by The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) on June 25-26, 2018, in Washington, D.C. He will be joined by senior project manager Stacy Roman of Commodore Builders.

Colantonio is passionate about workforce development in the construction industry. As a board member for the Associated General Contractors of Massachusetts, he has spearheaded efforts to provide educational programming, guest speaker presentations and internship opportunities to local schools and universities. "I am extremely honored to attend this summit," Colantonio said. "It is crucial to identify how important STEM education is, not only for many college-bound students, but also for those entering the workforce and internships or apprenticeships. I plan to share how industry/educator partnerships can build on that education with innovative training and hands-on experience, benefitting everyone involved."

According to the OSTP, the State-Federal STEM Education Summit will convene a diverse group of State STEM leaders, including officials from governors' offices, K-20 educators, workforce and industry representatives, state policy experts, and non-government organization executives. These attendees will participate in the development of a new Federal 5-Year STEM Education Strategic Plan in compliance with America COMPETES Act of 2010.

"This event is the first time an administration has asked for this level of State input when developing a Federal STEM education strategy," said Jeff Weld, senior policy advisor and assistant director for STEM education at OSTP. "Top-down approaches to STEM education can often yield wonderful ideas, but it's at the State and community level where the momentum happens. State leaders know best what kinds of programs will work in their communities, and where they need the power of the federal government to help drive success in this field. STEM education is critical to preparing our

students for the jobs of the future. We must do everything we can to ensure that Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, communities, educators, and private industry partners are united for the long-term success of our Nation.”

Alongside OSTP in planning and carrying out this Summit are the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Smithsonian Institution. STEM leaders from all 50 states, as well as U.S. territories and tribes, will attend the Summit to illuminate and advance State-Federal STEM alignment.

In 1976, Congress established OSTP to provide the President and others within the Executive Office of the President with advice on the scientific, engineering, and technological aspects of the economy, national security, homeland security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery and use of resources, among other topics. OSTP also leads interagency science and technology policy coordination efforts, assists the Office of Management and Budget with an annual review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets, and serves as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.

Colantonio Inc. is a construction management and general contracting services firm specializing in the academic, mixed-income housing, municipal and historical restoration markets.

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