In 2010 the Obama Administration along with the Commission on Access set a goal of, ensuring that 55% of young Americans hold an Associates Degree or higher by the year 2025.

Source: College Board 2010

**Becoming Aware of the Challenges**

Some of the many barriers these students face include poverty, pressure to contribute to family income, and limited access to school counselors or other forms of mentors. Although, it is the goal of America to provide equal free adequate education to all students, we must remember the medium in which the message is delivered should be catered to the individual.

Another harsh reality is that a major portion of racial and ethnic minority students are victims of poverty. According to the U.S. Census Bureau there are 46.2 million people living in poverty, of that 46.2 million 35% of African American families and 34% of Latino American families are considered poverty level, compared to 13% of Caucasian families. Facing issues such as hunger can be a barrier that some students feel unable to overcome.

**Becoming Aware of Supportive Programs**

In order to increase minority enrollment in higher education, it is very important to support and strengthen the education of minority students at the K-12 levels. A number of higher education institutions, professional organizations, public and private corporations, and foundations have implemented early intervention programs designed to prepare minority students for college.

Programs such as:

- Parent and Counselors Together (PACT) a program under the National Association for College Admission Counseling provides a unique program designed to prepare middle-school parents for the college admissions process so they can be better informed when assisting their students.

- Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), created by the U.S. Department of Education, this discretionary grant program is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

- Talent Search, another program operating the U.S. Department of Education this program identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education.