



# NSBE

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS

The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) stands firmly against all legislation that denounces and prohibits the use of funds to “promote, support or maintain any programs or campus activities that espouse diversity, equity, or inclusion (DEI) and Critical Race Theory rhetoric," ([HB 999](#)) as well as all others of similar nature that undermine work towards educational equity, and thus, the work of NSBE.

Founded in 1975, NSBE is a college student-led, nonprofit organization with more than 14,000 collegiate, K–12 student and technical professional members; 650 chapters in the United States and abroad – all committed to ending the underrepresentation of African Americans in engineering and to increasing the number of Black engineers and other Black STEM professionals worldwide.

Like the leadership of NSBE today, the six African American engineering undergraduates who founded NSBE at Purdue University were students of history, as well as classically trained problem solvers, and community activists, and thus were aware of the elements of our Constitution that created the necessary context for the creation of the African American people, the concept of whiteness, and our multicultural nation. Our founders realized nearly five decades ago that increasing STEM knowledge and STEM proficiency of Black people in their country was critical to the uplift of the African American communities that had long been an integral but undervalued part of the U.S. economy.

NSBE’s mission is to graduate academically excellent, professionally successful, socially relevant Black engineers and other Black STEM practitioners from college, and we’re good at it. The average GPA of our members is 3.39, including our 7,439 collegiate members, 2,078 of whom are in their senior year, on the doorstep of professional success.

But even with NSBE’s success, diversity, equity and inclusion are still works in progress in STEM and elsewhere in our nation, today. Only about 4% of the students graduating from U.S. colleges and universities with engineering bachelor’s degrees are Black or African American. Nationwide, Black people were only 5% of the workers in science or engineering occupations in the United States in 2021, according to the National Science Foundation. A significant wage gap exists between racial groups in science and engineering occupations, even among those who have obtained the highest academic degrees in their field, with white workers in this category earning \$20,000 more per year, on average, than Black or African American workers. And when one looks at all STEM occupations, including science- and-engineering-related occupations, the wage gap still exists: \$65,959 for white workers, \$54,734 for Black workers. In Florida, in 2020, the average salary for white engineers was \$72,803, and the average salary for Black engineers was \$62,534.

NSBE is continuing to do the work, with our nationwide chapters and programs being at the heart of it all to build and maintain a vibrant STEM pipeline. However, legislation such as Senate Bill 266 (SB 266), its companion bill, House Bill 999 (HB 999), and others of similar nature coming down the pike in parts of the US like Texas and Louisiana, stand to hinder the continued success of NSBE as it will impact our ability to:

- **Host [NSBE's Summer Engineering Experience for Kids \(SEEK\) program](#)** – which are held in educational facilities in Florida and other parts of the US to provide high-quality learning

opportunities to underrepresented students who otherwise may not have access to a robust STEM education.

- **Convene at the chapter level** – which is essential for all levels of our membership, as it is key for the progression of our vibrant STEM pipeline and each member’s educational and career success.
- **Operate within our organizational model** – which calls for collegiate members to convene as leaders of the organization, as they participate at the board-level, fellowship, and receive mentorship in the interest of long-term career preparation and success.
- **Succeed professionally** – as NSBE’s professional membership base is strongly present in the educational sector, and thus will be negatively impacted by the forbidding of DEI consideration in the hiring process, and the censorship inherent in the legislation that will undermine or eliminate DEI roles NSBE professionals fulfill.
- **Function as an advocate for structural change** – as certain aspects inherent in recent legislation will cause interference.

STEM equity requires excellent education in K–12 schools and through college, but access to well-qualified math and science teachers in this country often depends on the race and socioeconomic status of the students in the school. A recent study by the National Science Board found that K–12 schools with lower-status or minority students had fewer highly qualified STEM teachers. And AP STEM courses are often missing from the curricula of Black students, says a recent study by the Education Trust and Equal Opportunity Schools.

Today, NSBE’s mission remains vital to Black communities and critical to the economic competitiveness of the U.S. as a whole. But as engineers, we know the necessity of defining a problem before setting out to solve it. Just as our work in meeting the global challenge of climate change requires acknowledging the central role of fossil fuels, building a better, stronger, more diverse, equitable and inclusive U.S.A. means confronting the challenge of racism.

We ask that the legislature of which this concerns join with NSBE and our many allies, and with other leaders of vision and conscience across the country, in embracing the true diversity, equity and inclusion that will make it possible for our nation to realize its democratic ideals and achieve its full economic potential.

Yours in truth,

**Janeen Uzzell**  
NSBE CEO

**Favour Nerrise**  
NSBE National Chair, 2022-2023

**Avery Layne**  
NSBE National Chair, 2023-2024