



## NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS

### PRESS RELEASE

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## BLACK ROLE MODELS TO ENGINEER THE FUTURE OF 3RD–5TH GRADERS

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Several hundred elementary school students across the country will participate in a series of technical competitions at a summer program designed to produce future engineers. Organized by the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), the **Summer Engineering Experience for Kids (SEEK)** camps will open their doors beginning this month in Columbus, Ohio; Oakland and San Diego, Calif.; and the District of Columbia.

The mission of the SEEK Camp is “to build a pipeline to careers in science, technology, engineering and math for African-American and other underrepresented minority children, by having them engage in interactive, team-based engineering projects,” said NSBE National Chair Calvin Phelps, 23, the top officer of the more than 35,000-member organization.

Tony Harris, one of NSBE’s founders and chair of its National Advisory Board, was a key proponent of the SEEK camp in Oakland.

“I am very excited that NSBE has decided to bring SEEK to Oakland,” Harris said. “Now Bay Area students from underrepresented communities will have an opportunity to get exposed to the exciting possibilities of an engineering career.”

“As a local employer as well as a parent myself, I know how important it is to provide role models to young students and to plant seeds in young minds at an early age,” he added.

SEEK was initially funded by a \$1-million donation to NSBE from the Battelle Foundation in 2007. Since its inception, the program has blossomed from two to four camps. A fundamental aspect of the SEEK program is that NSBE collegiate members serve as mentors to the third through fifth graders who participate in the camps. NSBE created SEEK to address not only the underrepresentation of blacks in STEM fields but also the underachievement of black students in K–12 classrooms. Over the past decade, black students have made up only about 5 percent of U.S. students receiving bachelor’s degrees in engineering, and today, less than half of black students in many U.S. cities graduate from high school on time.

The SEEK mentors will be trained by representatives of SAE International (the Society of Automotive Engineers) and Grace Carroll, Ph.D. of Carroll Consulting. The NSBE Pre-College Initiative (PCI) team developed the SEEK experience from SAE International's "A World in Motion," an interactive, standards-based curriculum that emphasizes student motivation, mentoring, cultural connection and parental involvement.

Franklin Moore, NSBE's director of programs, stated that, "We are extremely excited about what SEEK offers to our young children and perhaps even more excited that this comes at no cost to parents."

The list of NSBE's partners in SEEK has expanded over the years and now includes Chevron Corporation; The Clorox Company; Cummins Inc.; CSECO; Edison International; Intel Corporation; NRG Energy, Inc.; San Diego Gas & Electric Company, San Diego State University, S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy.

In addition, the free, three-week camp in Oakland has gained the support of many local organizations, such as Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity and 100 Black Men of America, Inc., both of which will provide judges for the weekly competitions.

"The support of so many generous partners is integral to the success of the SEEK program. But it is also evidence of our nation's need to rebuild its technological dominance by encouraging more young people to go into STEM," says Carl B. Mack, executive director of NSBE. Mack is leading NSBE's efforts to have a SEEK camp in every state in the U.S.

For more information about SEEK, including the dates of each camp, please visit [www.nsbe.org](http://www.nsbe.org). Or contact **Franklin Moore**, NSBE director of programs, at (703) 549-2207, ext. 204 or [fmoore@nsbe.org](mailto:fmoore@nsbe.org), or **Alaina Law**, NSBE Pre-College Initiative manager, at (703) 549-2207, ext. 301 or [alaw@nsbe.org](mailto:alaw@nsbe.org).

## **ABOUT NSBE**

The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), a student-governed, not-for-profit organization founded in 1975, is the premier organization serving blacks in engineering and technology. With more than 35,000 members and 400 chapters in the U.S. and abroad, NSBE supports and promotes the aspirations of college and pre-college students and technical professionals. NSBE's mission is "to increase the number of culturally responsible black engineers who excel academically, succeed professional and positively impact the community."