

# Cummins Scores Big at NSBE Conferences

By Kevin M. Briscoe

**A**s a member of NSBE's Board of Corporate Affiliates (BCA) since 2004, Cummins Inc. is among a select group of global corporations that views work force diversity as a vital part of its business model. This commitment is evident in the Columbus, Ind.-based company's highly visible presence at NSBE's Fall Regional Conferences and Annual Convention, where Cummins recruiters work mightily to add to the company's growing employee population.

"Cummins recognizes the importance of successfully partnering with diversity organizations, not just for recruiting purposes but also to help develop the pipeline of black engineers," says Cummins BCA representative Khai B. Jones. "We knew we needed to be at the table, heavily involved, to contribute to, guide and support efforts to engage and retain minority STEM talent."

Cummins is among NSBE's top financial supporters, but Jones adds that the company's involvement extends beyond dollars and cents.

"Recently, Cummins has provided much more support outside of the typical funding support," she says. "We have provided Six

Sigma training to NSBE staff. Employees have volunteered at SEEK (Summer Engineering Experience for Kids) camps and have worked with students at the campus level to serve as mentors."

Cummins is a corporation of complementary business units that design, manufacture, distribute and service engines and related technologies, including fuel systems, controls, air handling, filtration, emission solutions and electrical power generation systems. With such expansive operations, Cummins is always on the lookout for qualified candidates who not only possess strong skills in a given discipline but also demonstrate the core values that have

made the company a global success. Toward that end, Cummins has actively courted NSBE members.

"Last year's (Annual Convention was) very productive for our partnership with NSBE," says Eric Knuth, a Cummins recruiter. "We hired 30-plus NSBE members and anticipate we will improve on that number this year. Cummins is hiring across all of our engineering disciplines. We hope to find over 5,000 new employees globally this year."

Among those who have recently joined the Cummins team are NSBE members Danielle Rae Bell, Joshua Meduoye, Ijeoma T. Oporum and Karmell A. Wisdom.

## DANIELLE RAE BELL

Growing up playing with LEGOs and K'Nex toys in Indianapolis, Ind., Danielle Bell chose her profession when she was 10.

"At that point in my life, I set a long-term goal for myself: becoming an engineer," says Bell, 23, who has been with Cummins since May 2011. "Ironically, there were not any engineers in my entire family, and, even worse, I would be a first-generation college student. But, I didn't let any of those obstacles get in my way. Instead, I used them as steppingstones to begin my journey to an engineering career."

Bell hopes her journey will take her to her goal of becoming a vice president of manufacturing. In the meantime, the road to that position has begun with her current stint as an engineer in Cummins' Manufacturing Development Program, an accelerated



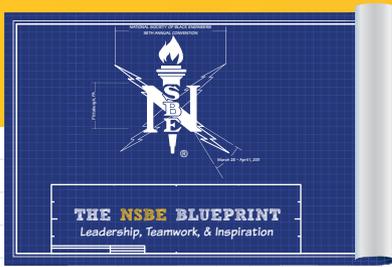
Danielle Rae Bell

two-year program that prepares engineers to become leaders in manufacturing technology, manufacturing operations and plant management. In her current rotation — the first of four — Bell is focused on engine assembly technologies as they relate to global manufacturing engineering.

Having been a member of NSBE since her sophomore year in high school, Bell credits the Society with putting her on the path to success at Cummins.

"My relationship with Cummins started through NSBE at its Region IV Fall (Regional) Conference in 2010," says Bell, who is now a member of the Indianapolis, Ind. Alumni Chapter. "Cummins (had) such an immense presence at the conference that you could feel its power. I was also very impressed with its stance on diversity, its generous support of NSBE and the vast array of opportunities that it offers."

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### JOSHUA MEDUOYE

“My first impression of Cummins is wrapped in its vision statement, which is very similar to my personal goal of changing people’s lives with technology,” says Meduoye, who was born in Nigeria. “I was thrilled that Cummins is not just a company that is anxious about profit but more concerned about making a positive change in people’s lives.”

Meduoye adds: “I decided to become an engineer with a goal (of) improving and continuing the legacy that great minds have set by exhibiting life-transforming technological innovation (that is) relevant (to) today’s world.”

A 2011 graduate of Morgan State University, in Baltimore, Md., Meduoye, 24, is now busy at work as a controls test



Joshua Meduoye

engineer, responsible for validating the electronic controls logic in emission solution systems. He ensures that the quality of the final product meets the customer’s requirements. In the process, he meets the challenge of learning and implementing constant technological improvements.

Meduoye says he is thankful for the part NSBE has played in developing his career.

“NSBE has played a major role in igniting my passion for technology by exposing me to numerous opportunities...that I would otherwise have no access to,” says the 2008 NSBE BCA Scholarship recipient. “This helped me appreciate the benefits of hard work and was very encouraging.”

So, what’s next for Meduoye?

“To be the driver of the next big innovative technology,” he says.

### IJEOMA T. OPURUM

For Ijeoma Oporum, 26, there was no defining childhood moment that led to her decision to pursue an engineering career.

“You could say that engineering chose me,” she jokes.

Now, as part of the Engineering Development Program (EDP), Oporum is part of the Cummins Advanced Engineering Aftertreatment Controls team. She is responsible for analyzing, validating and improving an aftertreatment simulation model to provide better soot load estimation. Since taking on this role, she says she has identified and quantified the various factors that contribute



Ijeoma T. Oporum

to errors in soot load estimation.

“I enjoy the challenges I face every day, because it keeps me on my feet and never bored,” says Oporum, who holds degrees from George Washington University and Duke University and, like Meduoye, was born in Nigeria. “Best of all, I like the fact that I’m given the flexibility to create solutions my own way, without restrictions.”

After completing the EDP rotation, Oporum hopes to use her skills in a more “customer-oriented role, where I can apply all of the technical expertise I (will) have acquired and eventually lead a global team that will take Cummins to greater heights.”

### KARMELL A. WISDOM

Although she didn’t know much about Cummins, at first, Karmell Wisdom quickly found out that the company had a reputation for nurturing diverse talent.

“I found out about Cummins through NSBE, actually,” says the Evanston, Ill., native, aged 26. “I wasn’t very familiar with them but kept seeing the huge booths at the convention... So I knew they were serious about aligning themselves with what NSBE was doing and having a long-term presence. Once I started doing my research, I found the company offered exactly what I was looking for: a strong global competitor in their market that sought out diverse talent and offered opportunities for growth and personal development.”

Wisdom is a global industrial application engineer for Cummins’ engine business, dealing with product selection, installation design and installation validation. She primarily supports customers in China, Japan, Korea, India and Brazil.



Karmell A. Wisdom

“My personal satisfaction (with the job) comes in two forms,” says the Wayne State University graduate and former NSBE National Executive Board member. “The first is seeing something that I developed come to fruition...and the second is being able to do everything I want career-wise... such as international travel and dealing with the business side of the organization.”

Like her fellow NSBE members and Cummins colleagues, Wisdom is appreciative of her NSBE experience and its positive impact on her professional development.

“My NSBE experience definitely trained me to be ready to go from the classroom to the boardroom,” she says.

“NSBE grooms leaders through a culture of dedication, execution and excellence, and that is the culture that will help you succeed in any organization.” ■

Kevin M. Briscoe is a writer based in Baltimore, Md., and a former editor of NSBE Magazine.