Golden Torch Honorees

The NSBE Golden Torch Awards are the top honor given by the National Society of Black Engineers. Now in their 17th year, these awards recognize individuals and organizations that exemplify NSBE’s ideals of academic excellence, professional success and dedication to the advancement of the black community. The culminating event of NSBE’s Annual Convention, the NSBE Golden Torch Awards ceremony will take place this year on Saturday evening, March 29, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, in Nashville, Tenn. The ceremony is a great show with a higher purpose. Since their inception, the NSBE Golden Torch Awards have provided millions of dollars in scholarships to talented high school seniors.

GOLDEN TORCH LEGACY AWARD

Dereje Agonafer, Ph.D.
Jenkins Garrett
Professor, Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
The University of Texas at Arlington

After receiving a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from Howard University in 1984, Dr. Dereje Agonafer joined IBM Corporation and soon became the IBM Center of Competence for Computer Aided Thermal Engineering. In 1991, he received the “IBM Outstanding Technical Achievement Award in Appreciation for Computer Aided Thermal Modeling.” The methodology he outlined as a co-inventor of a patent entitled “Methods and System for Thermal Analysis of Electronic Packages” is now a standard in most commercial electronic cooling CFD codes.

Dr. Agonafer subsequently moved to academia, where he has had a long and distinguished career as an educator and researcher. In 2013, he was recognized as The University of Texas at Arlington “Phi Kappa Phi Recognized Professor,” having been nominated by undergraduate and graduate students of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi as the faculty member who made the most profound impact on their academic development. He has published 195 papers and nine patents and has successfully advised 95 graduate students. He now advises 12 Ph.D.s and 26 M.Sc. students and is the director of two centers, including an NSF IUCRC in Energy Efficient Systems. Professor Agonafer has made significant contributions to the advancement of African Americans in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), through mentoring, as an advisor to the Howard University College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Science, and through other services.

Professor Agonafer and his wife, Carolyn, live in Southlake, Texas, and have two children. Dr. Damena Agonafer, their son, received his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is now a post-doc at Stanford University. Dr. Senayet Agonafer, their daughter, received an M.D. from Duke University and is now a radiology resident at Albert Einstein in New York.

CORPORATE COMMUNITY SERVICE
General Mills, Inc.

Since its origins in the 1860s, General Mills has understood the precious opportunity and responsibility the company has not only to create value for shareholders but also to have a positive and lasting impact that extends throughout its communities. The General Mills Foundation awards grants of $10,000 each to 50 nonprofits, schools, theaters, and other organizations that have programs that support people of color. Many of these grants have specifically given children the opportunity to excel academically through educational enrichment. Since 2004, the program has served more than 500,000 children, families and individuals across the Twin Cities’ seven counties with a total of $4 million in grants.

Another initiative is Join My Village (JMV), a program founded and supported by General Mills that empowers women and girls in the some of the world’s poorest communities to create a better life for themselves, their families and their communities. JMV provides educational and economic support to women and girls through an innovative click-to-commit model, which unlocks corporate dollars when Join My Village followers and fans complete online actions, such as watching or liking a JMV program update using social media. More than 400,000 people, including many General Mills employees, have clicked to direct dollars to support this program.
Golden Torch Honorees

CORPORATE DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP
General Mills, Inc.

The equation is simple: diversity plus inclusion equals business value. General Mills not only wants diversity, it believes diversity is critical to the company’s success. The company believes it connects with its consumers, customers and communities more effectively because its employee population mirrors the demographics of the nation.

Ten of General Mills’ senior leaders have organized an Executive Diversity Council to listen, learn, respond and enforce accountability throughout the organization. The council members act as advisers to the several diversity organizations within General Mills.

One of these organizations is the Black Champions Network (BCN), the largest employee network within General Mills. Network participation is actively promoted to new hires as a way to make professional connections and identify successful career paths. One way the BCN is active in the African-American community is through the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Breakfast. What started with 800 guests in 1991 has grown so large that it reaches full capacity seating at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

In the ever-changing business environment, it is critical to have processes and tools in place to ensure the success of African Americans within the professional arena. Tools used within General Mills to pinpoint high-potential individuals and provide training, leadership roles and experiences needed to accelerate their development and professional advancement include the People and Organization Review, and the Diversity Scorecard. General Mills also provides many opportunities for employees to grow. Mentoring opportunities are available to multicultural employees at all stages of their careers. Through sponsorships, qualified multicultural employees are teamed with an executive within their own business function.

DISTINGUISHED ENGINEER OF THE YEAR
Moses K. Mingle
Electronics Engineer, Intelligence and Information Warfare Directorate (I2WD) Branch Chief, Electronic Warfare Systems Grounds Branch United States Army

Moses K. Mingle leads a branch of government and contractor personnel working toward the development of state-of-the-art technology in support of the electronic warfare mission to the United States Army. He previously served as the chief engineer and assistant product manager for Product Manager Counter Radio Controlled Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) Electronic Warfare (PdM CREW). He and his team are credited with providing significantly improved technology capabilities for CREW systems that saved the Army, the Program Management Office and the U.S. taxpayer more than $120 million.

In his earlier position, as team leader for the Radio Frequency Measurement and Signature Intelligence Branch with I2WD, he led two key development programs: countermeasure systems that were used by the U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and other theaters of operation throughout the world to defeat improvised explosive devices. Both programs received the 2006 and 2008 “Top 10 Greatest Army Inventions” awards.

Mingle holds a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Fairleigh Dickinson University, a Master of Science degree in electrical engineering from New Jersey Institute of Technology, and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Phoenix. He has received numerous honors for his achievements and is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers.

GRADUATE STUDENT OF THE YEAR
Whitney B. Gaskins
Ph.D. Candidate, Biomedical Engineering University of Cincinnati

Whitney B. Gaskins is a student of biomedical engineering with a focus on engineering education. Her research is on improving learning environments for all students by examining pedagogy, teacher training and perception, and stereotype threat. She also studies stress in the classroom environment and the effect it has on health and academic performance. Gaskins has been recognized by the National Technical Association for her novel approach to studying students, specifically underrepresented minorities and women, and she has been a Graduate Engineering Education Consortium for Students Fellow sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

Gaskins earned her Bachelor of Science degree in biomedical engineering from the University of Cincinnati and has a Master of Quantitative Analysis degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Business. Along with her scholastic achievement, Gaskins serves on three diversity councils at the university and has worked as an engineering professional for companies including GE, Atricure and Toyota.

A mentor, advisor and community activist, Gaskins has dedicated her life to motivation and philanthropic endeavors. In 2009, she founded The Gaskins Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate and empower the African-American community.

Gaskins was named Miss Black Ohio in 2009 and used this platform to improve the self-image of young women. She also served as executive director for the scholarship pageant for Ohio from 2010 to 2012, a role in which she provided educational opportunities to outstanding young women of color. Gaskins also...
Golden Torch Honorees

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delivers motivational speeches around the country, addressing personal and professional development, embracing one’s inner beauty, and the importance of STEM in the African-American community.

DR. JANICE A. LUMPKIN EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Isaac Atuahene
Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant, Industrial Engineering University of Tennessee

Isaac Atuahene is a doctoral candidate at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK), Industrial and Systems Engineering department. A lover of teaching, he is committed to education and research that allow him not only to use his academic background to achieve his research goals but also make original scientific contributions to his field of interest and to mankind in general.

Atuahene’s passion has been to educate upcoming engineers, and through his membership and participation in the UTK chapter of NSBE, he has been able to pursue that passion, as well as gain teaching experience through outreach and volunteer programs.

Atuahene received his master’s degree in aviation/aerospace systems in 2009 at the University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI) in Tullahoma, Tenn. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in geomatic engineering at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, in Kumasi, Ghana, in 2005.

Atuahene has received numerous academic awards, among them, the 2013 National Science Foundation ISERC Travel Award, the 2013 UTK Graduate Student Travel Award, the IIE Lean and Six Sigma Poster Completion Award in 2013, the Graduate Diversity Enhancement Fellowship-UTK in 2009–2010, the Lloyd Crawford Fellowship/Scholarship-UTSI in 2008-2009 and the UTSI Graduate Fellowship in 2007–2008.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT

Lt. Gen. Darren W. McDew
Commander, 18th Air Force
United States Air Force

The son of an Air Force senior non-commissioned officer, Darren McDew grew up with role models who exemplified leadership and a commitment to integrity, service before self, and excellence. Those values continue to guide him today as a leader and an enthusiastic mentor to youth.

McDew describes growing up as a “shy kid” who lived with a “spectator approach”: experiencing life through books and academics. Thanks to the support of great mentors, he learned that through hard work, hustle, teamwork, leadership and character, he could accomplish nearly anything: a message he continues to share with our nation’s youth.

A civil engineering graduate of Virginia Military Institute, where he was the school’s first African-American regimental commander of the Corps of Cadets, Gen. McDew has had a diverse career that includes serving as the Air Force’s military aide to the president, the Air Force’s director of Public Affairs, the chairman of the Joint Chief’s Vice Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, and commander of the Air Force District of Washington.

Gen. McDew now serves as the commander of the Eighteenth Air Force at Scott Air Force Base, III., where he leads more than 39,000 personnel with operational control of more than 1,000 military aircraft. His organization is responsible for providing airlift, aerial refueling, aeromedical evacuation and contingency response capabilities that support the global reach of U.S. military forces.

Gen. McDew continues to advocate for the nation’s youth, particularly those interested in STEM careers, and has been recognized for this work with honors such as his induction into the Boys and Girls Club of America Alumni Hall of Fame. As he notes, “Our nation’s future success, indeed civilization’s future success, depends on talented, innovative and bold men and women. These individuals are the ones who will lead our country successfully through the challenges of tomorrow.”

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

Sabiha Quraishi
President
Masha Manufacturing Inc.

After her marriage in 1987, in her home country, India, Sabiha Quraishi came to the U.S. in 1989, with a master’s degree in biochemistry from Bombay University and a diploma in computer science from Datamatics Corporation, also in Bombay.

Within a year and a half of her arrival in the U.S., she and her husband, Mashallah, started their own jewelry manufacturing company, Masha Manufacturing, in Albuquerque, N.M. They have owned and managed the enterprise for the past 23 years. Being blessed with three wonderful boys, the couple has been able to grow this family-owned operation and help the family’s dreams come true.

Being a jewelry manufacturer has given Quraishi many invaluable lessons and experiences. Things have not come easy for her as a minority businesswoman, but with perseverance and resilience, she has always paved a new path toward success. She strives to instill values of hard work and dedication into her children and the other people around her and gives the greatest credit for her success to her husband, who has always supported her in major and minor endeavors through the years.

Quraishi has served as director of Sisters Affairs for the Islamic Center of New Mexico and has volunteered in the local Community Center promoting interfaith dialogues, New Muslim programs and causes to benefit women and children. In 2011, she graduated from Emerge, an organization that helps train Democratic women to run for public office.
Golden Torch Honorees

**PIONEER OF THE YEAR**

**Charles A. Stout, Ph.D., P.E.**
Director of Research and Development
Mueller Industries, Inc.

Dr. Charles Anthony Stout was a freshman at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) when he realized he wasn’t prepared for the challenge. The oldest of seven siblings, he became the first member of his family to complete college.

“It wasn’t, because I didn’t have the role models in academics,” he recalls. “In high school, I got by on talent without working very hard. In college, this caught up with me, and the dean of engineering actually suggested that perhaps my talents lie in another field…. However, I persevered and eventually earned a doctorate in mechanical engineering.”

As an undergraduate at the University of Memphis, which he attended after leaving IIT, he followed through on an early interest in engineering. He was very active in engineering-based organizations such as NSBE, in which he was chapter president. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering, he went to work as an HVAC design engineer. Two years later, he returned to the University of Memphis to complete the Master of Science in mechanical engineering program. While he was working as a graduate student, he teacher of mechanical engineering courses and a researcher at The University of Memphis Flow Research Center, he decided to study for his doctorate.

Since August 2010, Dr. Stout has been Mueller Industries director of research and development. In this position, he leads the company’s product development efforts to compete for the dominant market positioning in pipe, tube and fitting products. Earlier, he was a member of the Boeing Environmental Control Systems (ECS) team, where he worked on air quality research and development.

With his commitment to career, Dr. Stout has not neglected his community. He enjoys volunteering with children to get them interested in science and engineering and has continued to help steer youth into higher education.

**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN INDUSTRY**

**George A. Parker**
Associate Technical Fellow
Technical Lead Engineer,
Chemical Technology/
Northwest Analytical
The Boeing Company

From the hard streets of Harlem to the bright lights of the NBA, George Parker has gained experience and knowledge that make young people take notice. Parker uses his influence in his never-ending quest to promote the importance of education to young people, especially young black men.

Parker grew up on the Lower Eastside of Manhattan and West Harlem, where he attended New York City public schools and learned to play music and sports. A skilled athlete, he grew up playing his favorite sport of basketball with friends including Nate (“Tiny”) Archibald, Lew Alcindor (Kareem Abdul-Jabbar), Julius (“Dr. J”) Erving and Earl (“the Goat”) Manigault. He received All-City and All-Manhattan honors as a high-school junior and senior.

Upon graduation, Parker was given an athletic scholarship to attend St. Martin’s College in Olympia, Wash., where he played basketball all four years as a starter. Upon graduation, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry.

During his senior year, Parker was drafted by the Portland Trailblazers of the NBA. In 1972, en route to the Baltimore Bullets NBA team, Parker was drafted into the United States Army, where he spent two years as a scientist and engineer.

Parker has worked at Boeing for more than 25 years and participates in numerous activities that educate and promote scientific opportunities for young students and newly hired engineers. For instance, through Boeing/Edmonds Community College, he developed the Material Science Technology Exposure Program, which is particularly beneficial to minorities. Parker also lectures and mentors university students on chemistry and material science subjects, as well as on life skills such as communication, time management, self-awareness, reading and math.

**MINORITY ENGINEERING PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR**

**Stephen R. Cox**
Project Director
Greater Philadelphia Region Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation

Stephen R. Cox graduated from Drexel University with a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and atmospheric sciences in 1974 and a Master of Science degree in biophysics and biomedical engineering in 1976. He is the founder and developer of the Greater Philadelphia Region Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (Philadelphia AMP) funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Philadelphia AMP is a tri-state alliance of nine higher education institutions whose mission is to substantially increase the quantity and quality of underrepresented minority students, in particular, African-American, Hispanic and Native American students, receiving baccalaureate degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and subsequently, entering graduate school to attain doctoral degrees. Cox has served as the project director of Philadelphia AMP since its inception in November 1994 and since its subsequent movement in 2000 to Drexel University, where it has remained to the present.

As project director of Philadelphia AMP, Cox has raised more than $23 million and fostered inter-institutional relationships across the nine participating institutions. Through the Educational Advancement...
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Alliance, with support from the National Nuclear Security Administration, and with funds secured through the “NSF LSAMP Bridge to the Doctorate” program, he has helped the Alliance to substantially increase its capacity to recruit, develop and support underrepresented minority STEM graduate students with full tuition and stipend assistance. He has also personally mentored Drexel students as undergraduates through their doctoral completion.

To date, the Philadelphia AMP initiative has produced more than 9,600 minority STEM B.S. degrees, more than 2,200 minority STEM M.S. degrees and more than 300 minority STEM Ph.D. degrees. Through the leveraging of Philadelphia AMP funding, 48 students have also participated in international laboratory research activities in seven countries.

PRE-COLLEGE INITIATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

Paige Lewter
Advisor
Southern Maryland NSBE Jr. Chapter

Paige Lewter, from Ahoskie, N.C., graduated summa cum laude from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering, in 2011. While at North Carolina A&T, she was involved in numerous campus organizations, including NSBE. She began her career as an electrical engineer with NAVAIR (the Naval Air Systems Command) in Patuxent River, Md., in July 2011, where she serves in the Avionics Department. She is the lead engineer for the AAR-47 Missile Approach Warning System for the Patuxent River Professionals Chapter, for which she serves as the Pre-College Initiative chair. She also spearheaded the November 2012 chartering of the Southern Maryland NSBE Jr. Chapter, for which she is the lead advisor, and she led the establishment of the chapter’s “STEM Exploration: Successfully Supplementing Integral Opportunities & Navigating Students” program (“SESSIONS”). This was the first NSBE Jr. Chapter in Southern Maryland and the first in St. Mary’s County, Md.

Lewter has received many accolades for her hard work, including the National Young Technical Professional Member on the Move Award from NSBE and the Region II Leadership Award at the 2013 NSBE Annual Convention. She is actively involved in her community, participating in STEM activities, mentoring and tutoring efforts.

PRE-COLLEGE INITIATIVE PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

Pre-Freshman Program in Engineering and Science at Chicago State University

Terri Young, former director of the Engineering Studies Program at Chicago State University (CSU), developed the Pre-Freshman Program in Engineering and Science (PREP) in 1988. PREP is a pre-college program designed to motivate minority students to achieve their full potential, by providing them with an educational enrichment experience that provides the solid academic preparation necessary for success in college-level math and science courses. With the generous support of the CSU Foundation, Corporate and Foundation Donors, and the STEM disciplines at CSU, the program has motivated minority students to select career options in the STEM fields at universities across the country.

In the summer of 2013, under the direction of Marnie Boyd, PREP program coordinator, the program celebrated its 25th anniversary. Since its inception, approximately 22,000 students from more than 50 elementary and secondary schools have participated in summer, after-school and Saturday morning programs at CSU. Ninety-eight percent of the students who have participated in the program have gone on to college, with approximately 75 percent of those students majoring in STEM fields. In 1999, 2005, 2007 and 2008, the National Society of Black Engineers presented the CSU Pre-Freshman Program in Engineering and Science with the Golden Torch Award for “Pre-College Program of the Year.”

PRE-COLLEGE INITIATIVE STUDENT OF THE YEAR (FEMALE)

Paige Cheatham
San Antonio City Wide NSBE Jr. Chapter
San Antonio, Texas

When Paige Nicole Cheatham joined the San Antonio City Wide NSBE Jr. Chapter in 2007, she had never had any exposure to careers in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM). But that immediately changed when she joined NSBE. Paige became more confident in her math and science skills and began to consider college majors in STEM.

This was the start of her fulfillment of NSBE’s mission. She is a dedicated student who maintains a 3.85 average at Saint Mary’s Hall in San Antonio, Texas, received National Achievement Outstanding Student recognition and is an AP Scholar with honors.

Paige honed her leadership skills in NSBE, serving as her chapter’s 2012–13 president and as a regional officer. Paige is committed to impacting her community through service, primarily through her participation in NSBE programs, such as her chapter’s SAT math tutoring for 7th graders for the Duke Talent Identification Program.

“It was through this volunteerism that I came to realize my goal of a life of service in underserved communities,” she says. “I am undecided between science and engineering but feel better prepared to excel in either direction because of my involvement with NSBE.”
Golden Torch Honorees

PRE-COLLEGE INITIATIVE STUDENT OF THE YEAR (MALE)

Nathan Harris
Northland High School
NSBE Jr. Chapter
Columbus, Ohio

Nathan Lee Roy Harris is a fifth-generation college candidate who will enter higher education this fall. Today, Nathan is a senior at Northland High School with a 4.57 grade-point average and numerous extracurricular activities on his resume, among them, the school band, as drum major; Northland’s S.T.E.M. Club, as president, and the varsity baseball team. He is a member of the National Honor Society and is a Morehouse/Coca-Cola Andrew Young Global Leader.

Nathan has great optimism and a goal of gaining a foothold in the future of America. He sees himself as a vector of untapped potential, not a victim of his society. He has chosen to live above the stereotypes and norms of society and become a computer engineer. His choice is to attend Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga., and earn a double degree there in theology and engineering. With those credentials, he plans to become a pastor and a successful engineer, able to guide individuals on the right path while creating a path of change within our world for the greater good.

OUTSTANDING WOMAN IN TECHNOLOGY

Tonya M. Noble
Director, Training Systems and Government Services Navy Training Programs
The Boeing Company

Tonya M. Noble is responsible for business growth, strategic direction and execution of Navy Training Systems programs at Boeing, including P-8A, F/A-18E/F Hornet, F/A-18G Growler, T-45 UMFO Trainers and Maritime Plus. Before serving in this capacity, she was P-8A primary customer focal and senior manager of Integration and Test for the P-8A Training Systems.

Noble holds a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering from Western Michigan University and a Master of Science in computer science from Webster University. She earned her Master of Business Administration from Washington University through the Executive MBA program.

Noble is a member of Boeing’s Leadership Association, the Greater Missouri Leadership Foundation and the Academy of Science of St. Louis. In addition, she serves as the executive focal for Western Michigan University. She is involved in leadership development and networking programs at Boeing. She is also a mentor for several young engineers and involves herself in programs to engage youth and encourage them to become interested in engineering and technical fields.

In her spare time, Noble enjoys developing websites for small businesses. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and previously served as co-chair of the Technology Task Force for the organization.

Her prominent recognitions include being selected as a 2007 “Top 40 Under 40” award recipient by the St. Louis Business Journal, and being featured in the Charles H. Wright Museum’s Inspiring Minds: African Americans in Science and Technology ongoing exhibit. She was also featured in Ebony magazine as an up and coming leader to emulate and has been spotlighted in radio ads and on billboards for making her mark at educational institutions.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Angelena Edwards
Central Jersey Professionals Chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers
Deputy Director
NYCHA Capital Projects–Brooklyn/Staten Island Division

Angelena Edwards’ top priorities are God, family, church, friends and community. She has translated these values into her work at church as a community outreach coordinator and in the community with Habitat for Humanity, for which she served as a board member, and with the National Society of Black Engineers.

Enthusiastic about education from an early age, Edwards graduated as salutatorian from Redeemer Lutheran School in Glendale, N.Y., and received many engineering awards and honor roll placements at Brooklyn Technical High School. During her senior year at Brooklyn Tech, she was accepted at Rutgers University.

Edwards now has more than a decade’s worth of experience in her field, including engineering and management positions at Public Service Electric and Gas and at Piller Power Systems. In her current position at New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Capital Projects—Brooklyn/Staten Island division, she is responsible for large renovations of housing developments. NYCHA provides decent affordable housing to low-income families. Edwards views her current work with the organization as a direct outgrowth of her desire to impact the community through engineering.

Edwards is an active NSBE member who has held various leadership positions with the Society since college, among them, chapter president and regional board member. Her engineering aspirations have even taken her as far as Kenya, with Engineers Without Borders, to work on a water distribution system.

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Tajudeen Bakare has more than 29 years’ combined engineering experience involving highway bridge structures; transportation projects including consulting engineering; structural design; construction document preparation; client management; business development; project delivery and project management. One of his achievements and diverse designs can be found in the bridges of the I-70/I-75 System Interchange Reconstruction Design in Dayton, Ohio.

Bakare received both his Bachelor of Engineering in civil engineering (1985) and Master of Engineering in structural engineering (1988) from the City College of New York of the City University of New York. He has earned Professional Engineer licenses in the States of New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio.

Born in Lagos, Nigeria, Bakare is a proud single parent of two sons: Ameen, 30, a civil engineer, and Azeez, 25, an architect. Taj is an active member of the Central Ohio NSBE Professionals chapter (CONPC) in NSBE’s Region IV, as well as the American Society of Civil Engineers and several other civil engineering organizations.

He was featured in “AE Members on the Move” in the Winter 2010/2011 Issue of NSBE Magazine; in the 6th Edition of “Who’s Who in Black Columbus,” and in CNN Money Magazine’s “Best Jobs in America” in 2010. His peers in CONPC have named him Member of the Year twice, for 2007–2008 and 2010–2011. Bakare serves as program director of the Association for Bridge Construction and Design, Central Ohio Region; and on the Second Ward Community Initiative board of the City of Delaware, Ohio, where he resides.