The talented, young members of the National Executive Board (NEB) govern the National Society of Black Engineers. Led by the top five national executive officers, known as the NEO, they rise to the task of leading tens of thousands of NSBE members toward academic excellence, cultural responsibility, professional success and positive impact on community.

**THE NEW NEO**

**National Chair** Calvin Phelps, 23, is a master’s degree student in mechanical engineering at Cornell University. A member of NSBE since 2004, his junior year in high school, he served the organization as a Pre-College Initiative Conference volunteer at the 2006 Annual Convention and in subsequent years as treasurer then chair of Region II. Phelps has melded his service to NSBE with an outstanding academic record. He graduated from North Carolina State University in May 2009 with a Bachelor of Science degree in aerospace engineering and a 3.63 G.P.A. “I am guided by the words of wisdom given to me by my father,” he says. “Put God first, treat people right, and always do your best.”

**National Vice Chair** Kazeem B. Omidiji, 22, is a senior majoring in electrical engineering at the University of Nevada—Las Vegas, where his concentration is power systems. He joined NSBE during his freshman year and served as chapter vice president, effectively organizing and running a five-member Chapter Executive Board. He became chapter president that same year and held the position for three terms as he oversaw the development of UNLV NSBE. During his tenure, the chapter grew by 50 members, an executive board structure was put in place, and numerous corporate and government partnerships were formed. Omidiji has also served as NSBE’s Region VI vice chair and chair.

**National Secretary** Brenda A. Nathan, 21, is a senior majoring in mechanical engineering at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. She was introduced to NSBE by Cal Poly Pomona’s chapter president during her freshman year and since then has held various leadership positions with the society. Brenda decided to become an engineer after traveling to Cambodia and witnessing poverty and suffering there. Her goal is to use her knowledge of robotics and prosthetics to help people in Third World countries. Brenda was born and raised in Southern California and lives every moment to the fullest. Her saying “Go hard or go home.”

**National Treasurer** Sade Ruffin, 25, is a graduate student at the prestigious Columbia University in New York City, pursuing a graduate degree in chemical engineering. In her current position with NSBE, she is responsible for the creation and financial maintenance of the $8-million international operating budget, oversight of investments, chairing of the Convention Planning Committee Taskforce, service on the Administrative and Personnel Committee and other duties critical to the organization. Ruffin says she has learned an important truth during her five years of service as a NSBE leader: “When you do the right things for the right reasons, success is inevitable.”

**National Programs Chair** Jarrell D. Johnson, 23, is a recent graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a degree in mechanical engineering and a minor in architecture and writing. He is now a first-year graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, pursuing an advanced degree in architecture. He is also a lifetime member of NSBE. Johnson was born and raised in the Chicago area and came to his current career interests — architecture, engineering and building technology — through a youthful love of the online game RollerCoaster Tycoon. He formerly served as chair and vice chair of NSBE’s MIT chapter and now is the group’s chapter advisor.