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National Society of Black Engineers Moves Its 50th Annual Convention From Florida

NSBE Votes to Relocate, Advancing Its Longstanding Mission in STEM Equity and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — After an unprecedented vote of its National Executive Board, the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) announced that its 50th Annual Convention has been relocated from Orlando, Florida. The convention, originally to be hosted at the Orange County Convention Center on Feb. 28–March 3, 2024, was expected to bring more than 15,000 attendees to the state.

NSBE’s mission is to increase the number of culturally responsible Black engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally and positively impact the community — a mission which leaders of the organization believe could not be advanced while hosting their 2024 Annual Convention in Florida.

“For such a momentous occasion as our 50th Annual Convention, we have a responsibility to ensure the best possible environment and outcome for our event,” said NSBE National Chair Avery Layne. “And with all things considered, including the current social and political climate in the state of Florida, we ultimately decided it would not be an ideal place to convene, nor would it provide a backdrop conducive to a full NSBE convention experience.”

Catalysts in the relocation decision-making process included concerns voiced by NSBE members, staff and advisors about the political climate and safety, as well as probable hindrance of the Society’s ability to advance its mission and function authentically within its organizational model.

The student-led organization is working toward the goals of Game Change 2025, including a “10K Goal” of leading the U.S. to produce 10,000 new Black Engineers each year by 2025, and is expanding the social justice consciousness and activism that have been at the center of the Society since it was founded by African American engineering students at Purdue University in 1975. With Florida at the
forefront of efforts across the nation to limit diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), NSBE says it is important that unified voices be heard loudly there.

“The very basis of our work is equity,” said NSBE CEO Janeen Uzzell. “NSBE was formed almost 50 years ago in response to the sparsity of Black people enrolling and succeeding in engineering education programs. So, we stand firm in our decision to relocate, because, inherently, any efforts that seek to regress diversity, equity and inclusion directly impact us and are unaligned with the mission of NSBE.”

The Society is refocusing on supporting its members and celebrating the monumental impact of its upcoming 50th Annual Convention, which NSBE attendees are looking forward to fostering in the convention’s new host city of Atlanta, Georgia, at the Georgia World Congress Center, on March 20–24, 2024.

Registration for NSBE’s 50th Annual Convention, commonly referred to as #NSBE50, will open this fall. Attendees of the landmark event will include college and K–12 students; technical professionals; corporate, government and nonprofit organization executives and recruiters; higher education administrators and recruiters; community leaders; and more, for the convention’s hundreds of technical and career development workshops, networking sessions, general sessions, technical and scientific competitions, awards ceremonies, entertainment events and other activities developed around the theme “Engineering CommUNITY.”

ABOUT NSBE

Founded in 1975, the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) is one of the largest student-governed organizations based in the United States. With more than 14,000 members and 650 chapters in the U.S. and abroad, NSBE supports and promotes the aspirations of collegiate and pre-collegiate students and technical professionals in engineering and technology. NSBE’s mission is “to increase the number of culturally responsible Black engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally and positively impact the community.” For more information, visit www.nsbe.org.

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