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## School of Engineering Earns National Recognition for Diversity Efforts

American Society for Engineering Education honors Ole Miss with bronze-level status

FEBRUARY 23, 2021 BY EDWIN B. SMITH



Trinity Roebuck, a UM mechanical engineering student, is president of the school's chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers. The school's alumni have endowed several scholarships for students who demonstrate a commitment to the advancement of women and minorities in engineering as part of the school's diversity efforts. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi** School of Engineering has received bronze-level designation from the American Society for Engineering Education Diversity Recognition Program, the highest level of recognition available in the program.

According to the ASEE, the designation means that UM is among the nation's leaders in inclusive excellence.

"As a pillar of the flagship University of Mississippi, the **School of Engineering** is committed to promoting a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout our constituencies," said Dave Puleo, Ole Miss engineering dean. "The innovation and creativity fostered through diverse teams representing different backgrounds, perspectives and life experiences are needed to address engineering challenges of the 21st century and to advance our state."

The university was among the 220 signatories of the ASEE Deans Diversity Pledge, which committed the colleges to developing a diversity plan and creating at least one activity associated with K-12 or community colleges.

The UM engineering school's bronze application process began this past fall by identifying objectives for strengthening diversity, equity and inclusiveness initiatives paramount to the school's success. This effort involved developing a targeted equity-in-action plan focused on creating diverse workforce pipelines toward engineering careers. Key features of the plan are accountability and metrics for success.

The Diversity Recognition Program was created by the American Society for Engineering Education to publicly recognize those engineering and engineering technology colleges that make significant, measurable progress in increasing diversity, inclusion and degree attainment outcomes of their programs.

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OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

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The honor is given to colleges that sign the diversity pledge, build the infrastructure to support diverse populations, have at least one K-12 or community college pipeline activity and commit to a diversity and inclusion plan that includes measurable goals. The association plans to award silver and gold status in the future, but universities must first receive bronze recognition, which is valid for three years and is renewable.

"Recognition by the ASEE demonstrates the importance of the school's DEI efforts on a national scale," said Alexander Lopez, assistant professor of chemical engineering and the school's diversity liaison. "The ASEE bronze recognition is a crucial first step in pursuit of the objectives and achievements we seek to accomplish through our EIA plan.

"The hard work is just beginning; however, our EIA plan lays the foundation for the accomplishments we seek and the progress we hope to achieve."

To promote a more diverse student body, the school's alumni have been endowing scholarships for students who demonstrate a commitment to the advancement of women and minorities in engineering.

#### **About the American Society for Engineering Education**

The American Society for Engineering Education, founded in 1893, is a nonprofit organization of individuals and institutions committed to furthering education in engineering and engineering technology. To learn more about the ASEE Diversity Recognition program, visit <https://diversityrecognition.asee.org/>.

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