



AIChE Minority Affairs Community

MAC is now an AIChE Community!

JOIN YOUR TECHNICAL HOME
AIChE MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMUNITY

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Greetings from the MAC Chair

Dear MAC,

After 30 years of history championing the education, training, professional development, and recognition of chemical engineers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups from diverse backgrounds, what was once a committee has now become the Minority Affairs Community. While we have always been a community of individuals working towards the common goals of greater inclusion and representation in our profession, becoming a formal AIChE Community is an opportunity to grow the impact and reach of our activities with increased support from AIChE.

I would like to thank past-Chair, Dr. Manuela Ayee-Leong, for her leadership in setting up MAC as an AIChE community in 2022 and in restarting many of MAC's in-person activities and initiatives that were affected for several years by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Dr. Carlos M. Rinaldi-Ramos

In 2023, I look forward to working with new Chair-elect, Temitayo (Tayo) Femi-Fowode, the rest of the MAC executive committee, and the many long-time volunteers, friends, and advocates of our community to better serve chemical engineers from diverse and underrepresented groups. To achieve this, it is important to increase and broaden our membership, including allies and advocates of our mission. It is also important to establish transparent procedures for how we conduct our business, so there is a clear pathway for those who want to contribute to our mission through service and leadership. I also think it is important that we increase support for travel awards for MAC members who are trainees and young professionals to attend the AIChE annual meeting, where they may benefit from our programs and be motivated to continue being part of this community. Finally, it is imperative that we recognize the diversity of experiences that exists within our community and that we find ways to remain united in our goals while celebrating this diversity. For this, I think the formation of affinity groups within MAC is a key step forward. One example is the formation of the LatinXinChE affinity group, led by trainees and young professionals. I look forward to seeing them grow and to seeing others start similar affinity groups.

Finally, we invite anyone who shares our vision for growing MAC to participate in one of two upcoming virtual meetings, which will be held on **Thursday, May 18, 12-1PM Eastern Time, and on Tuesday, May 23, 6-7PM Eastern Time**. There we will provide an overview of the state of the community, goals and volunteer opportunities, and listen to member feedback and suggestions. Use the links on page 21 to register so you can receive the zoom link.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carlos M. Rinaldi-Ramos

MAC transitions to an AIChE community!

The Minority Affairs Committee of AIChE was established in 1990. The founding members like Henry Brown (late), Gerry Lessells, and James Wei, as well as leaders, members, and allies of MAC across three decades have led the pace in making MAC a welcoming environment that fosters professional and personal growth for minority chemical engineers and allies. At the AIChE Annual Meeting in 2022, MAC officially transitioned to a broader AIChE community. This transition give the Minority Affairs Community the visibility and capacity to make greater impact within AIChE and the industry at large. It will also foster collaboration with other AIChE communities and affiliate committees. Appreciation goes to the AIChE staff, leaders, and members of MAC that worked together to achieve the successful transition.

About the Minority Affair Community (MAC)

The Minority Affairs Community (MAC) provides a supportive environment for Chemical Engineers of underrepresented races, ethnicities, cultures, and their allies, to develop within their profession. MAC is committed to fostering a more equitable and accommodating field of Chemical Engineering where people of various backgrounds and experiences can feel safe and celebrated.

Learn more about joining AIChE and MAC Community at aiche.org/MAC

- Curated by Azeem Farinmade (MAC Communications officer)

MAC Transitions to an AIChE Community

Congratulations! MAC has become a Community!

This represents an evolution from its powerful beginning as a “Committee.” A MAC Community will allow us to communicate better and multiply our impact even if we change jobs and lose email addresses. We can also support MAC’s programming and scholarship ambitions through donations and dues.

To me, MAC has always meant leadership opportunity, mentorship, and friendship. Now, the MAC Community will be even more effective in supporting members in these key areas.



Mary Kathryn Lee

A Short Look Back

MAC began as a committee, supported by AIChE, formed by a few key members interested in action and populated by word of mouth and whomever happened to be in the meeting room at annual meetings. When I “joined” MAC in 2012, there might have been as few as 10 people. It was hard to make connections and it was difficult, sometimes, to be impactful.

Leadership Opportunities. I now sit on the AIChE Board of Directors (BOD) Executive Committee as Secretary after spending an additional 3-year term on the BOD. I can directly trace my trajectory to my start as a Secretary of MAC. I learned the kind of leader I was through service in MAC, not through my regular employment. I then brought those skills back to my workplace, creating more opportunities for my growth and development.

Now that MAC has become a Community, I believe that there will be even more Leadership Opportunities ahead for young professionals and more opportunities for mature members to give back. As MAC’s reach expands, so can its impact on the AIChE community.

Leadership opportunities came fast and early for me in MAC and can for everyone, no matter the stage in their career. You just need to care about the MAC community and MAC goals and be willing to work towards those goals. MAC gives everyone the opportunity to set those goals, to think outside the box, to recognize and address problems, barriers and limitations, and to encourage the next generation of professionals.

MAC Transitions to an AIChE Community

Mentorship. I want to give a shout out to 3 people in MAC that were outstanding mentors to me, each in their own unique way: Emmanuel Dada, Rodney Dotson and Christine Grant. Each of these outstanding individuals were past MAC chairs, all before I knew them. Each demonstrated how to support me in a new role, to provide feedback or just to lend an ear. They also expected the best of me and so I wanted to give the best of me. I could never have made those connections if not for MAC.

I believe that becoming a MAC Community will lead for many more opportunities to mentor and be mentored in person and virtually.

Friendship. Back in the day when I started at the research organization of a really large corporation, there were few employees of color. For many years I was the only chemical engineer, indeed the only PI of color. There was always a sense of isolation. MAC provided the opportunity for personal and professional friendships. There is no way to place a value on that.

I feel that MAC has always been a community of like-minded chemical engineers interested in providing opportunity and encouraging professionals in the best career there is. Now, we are more than a committee, we are officially a Community, expanding our reach to more students, government and industrial professionals and academics. I have a great belief in all we can do together.

The MAC community has always offered friendship, but my belief is that the expansion of MAC to a Community will enlarge our network and a larger network means more friends.

MAC Transitions to an AIChE Community



**Dr. Kazeem
Olanrewaju**

I am grateful to the Minority Affairs Community (MAC) for the privilege to serve as her chair-elect, chair, and past chair in 2019, 2020, and 2021, respectively. These three years of meritorious service were an opportunity I would forever be grateful to have seized and benefited from its proceeds in strengthening my career development and pursuit.

Benefits of Serving in MAC AIChE

The most enjoyable aspect of my involvement with AIChE's MAC is when I was Chair-Elect and Past Chair. This is based on the learning experience and skills acquired on how MAC operates, while I served as Chair-Elect. These achievements were made possible through the support of a selfless Chair, Dr. Siphon Ndlela, and a mentor, Dr. Emmanuel Dada, both of whom went the extra mile to educate me on how things operate in MAC. My participation as MAC's Past Chair equally remains an enjoyable experience because of the opportunity to contribute meaningfully and to support the current chair with input that can help move MAC forward. The aspect of my involvement with AIChE-MAC that has been most beneficial is the period I served as MAC's Chair. This is the year the world was battling COVID-19. The role offered me a platform to discover and explore inherent management skills and styles like servant leadership. It also created opportunities to meet and engage with high-level decision-makers (current and past presidents) in the institute. I cannot trade these levels of involvement with all my previous and current professional engagements.

Call to Action for serving under-represented engineers

MAC and AIChE need to make more progress in serving engineers that are underrepresented in the profession. Additionally, there is a need to expand the current incentives to support more minorities to attend regional and annual meetings/conferences. Such incentives could be increased in Janice Lumpkins' awardee. Beyond that, it is imperative to create more opportunities for underrepresented engineers to be involved and participate in various AIChE and MAC programs at the grass-root and annual conference meetings to bolster the institute's development strides. This can be done by developing programs specifically aimed at engaging underrepresented engineers. Equally, it is vital to create a meritorious institute award for underrepresented engineers who are exceptional in their various spaces of professionalism, such as in academia, industrial, and public sectors.

MAC Transitions to an AIChE Community

Broadening MAC's impact as a community

The reorganization of MAC as a broader AIChE Community will extend MAC's impact by upgrading MAC presence in AIChE to institute level recognition. As a broader community, MAC will foster collaboration with other AIChE communities and sub-groups. It will likewise promote awareness among the majority groups in AIChE and the opportunity for the latter to support MAC's vision and initiatives when needed. While this is commendable, it would not be out of place to know that several underrepresented engineers, who are AIChE members, are not aware of an AIChE community such as MAC which is specifically designed to serve their interests. There is therefore a need to promote the presence and vision of the community more broadly to engage more engineers.

Key takeaway about MAC

As a previous MAC leader, I would like AIChE Members to know that MAC is a well-organized, strong, and focused group that cares for the growth of AIChE and the professional development of her community. In addition, I would not hesitate to let non-minority AIChE members know that all are welcome to be a part of or friends of the community.

Highlights from MAC events at the 2022 AIChE Annual Meeting

MAC Eminent Engineers Award Ceremony

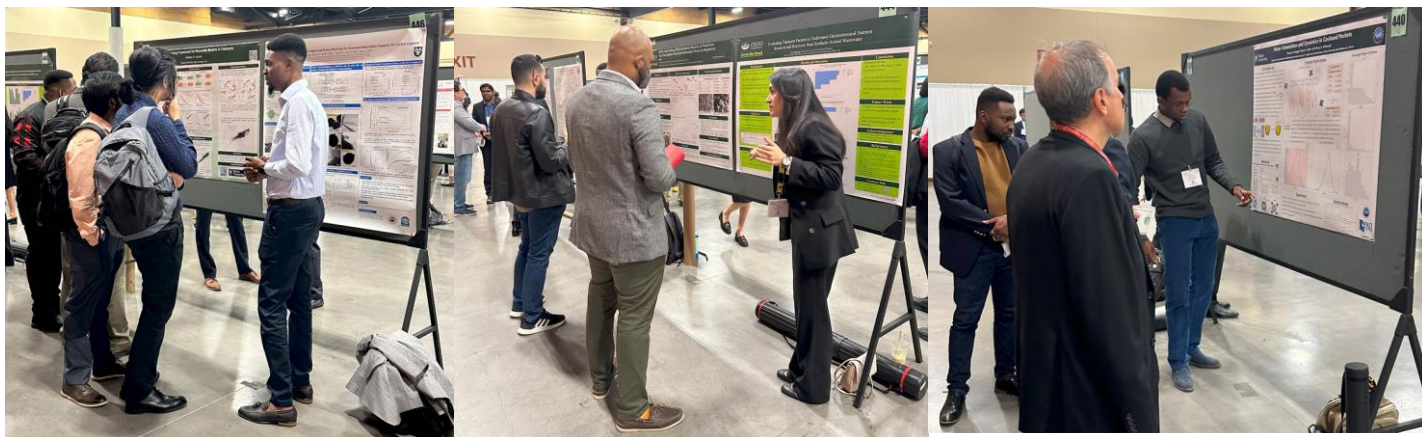


Congratulations to the MAC 2022 AWARDEES!!!



Highlights from MAC events at the 2022 AIChE Annual Meeting

MAC Poster Session



Minority Faculty Forum



Get to know the 2022 William Grimes and MAC Eminent Engineers Awardees

The William W. Grimes Award for Excellence in Chemical Engineering is in honor of William W. Grimes, the first African-American Fellow of AIChE. This award recognizes a chemical engineer's outstanding achievements in the chemical engineering profession and as a distinguished role model for minorities.

The MAC Eminent Engineer's Award is the Minority Affairs Committee's highest award and recognizes outstanding achievements from a professional in a traditional chemical engineering position or from a chemical engineer making significant contributions in a non-traditional profession.

*- Interviews curated by Motunrayo Ogunleye, Busayo Alagbe,
and Francis Chukwunta*

Dr. LaShanda Korley: 2022 William W. Grimes Award for Excellence in Chemical Engineering Recipient

Q: Dr. Korley, could you tell us about yourself and your journey to being a professor in Chemical Engineering and your current research field?

A: I am originally from the South, Georgia to be exact. I completed my dual degree in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering from Clark Atlanta University and Georgia Institute of Technology. During the summers I knew I wanted to spend some time doing research at other universities, so I went to Virginia Tech to learn about polymer science and engineering. Intrigued by this field, I knew that I wanted to pursue my Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering with a focus on polymers, which led me to MIT for graduate school. Although I've always known I wanted to be a faculty member, it was while at MIT that I experienced the many facets of teaching, service, and research excellence through the lens of a vibrant ecosystem of innovation. I completed my post-doctoral studies at Cornell University as



Dr. LaShanda Korley

the Provost's Diversity Fellow before starting my independent career as an Assistant Professor at Case Western Reserve University. I knew early on that academia was my ideal career path. Inspired by the educators in my family, primarily K-12, I have always loved the process of learning and sharing knowledge. What has been critical to my academic career trajectory is the motivation from mentors, classmates, and professors who encouraged me with a simple, "This role is well suited to you; you are making a difference". My current research program involves three main areas. One is bio-inspired innovation and how natural materials can be used as a muse to design functional materials. We also explore chemistries and processes to transforming plastics waste into high-value products, using concepts of chemical recycling and upcycling. The third area of focus involves using natural materials as a source or feedstock for new materials design, called biomass valorization.

Q: What are some of the challenges that you faced in your career as a chemical engineer, especially being from a minority demographic, and how did you overcome these?

A: Many of the challenges that I have experienced on my academic journey stemmed from the lack of representation at all levels. Representation matters, so that engineers can see themselves attaining a career goal and decision makers can appreciate that there is not just one path or background that aligns with "success". My thesis advisor and trail blazing chemical engineer, Paula Hammond, inspired me as a Black woman in the role to which I aspired. My network of Black female academics also included phenomenal leaders, such as Gilda Barabino and Christine Grant. I was surrounded by excellence, creativity, and inclusive leadership that allowed me to re-imagine society's view of what spaces I should enter. I learned to cultivate a network of inclusive mentors and advocates, to recognize and appreciate my contributions, and to model my values in leadership, mentoring, and innovation. The challenges that I encountered have served to strengthen my resolve to build better communities and to train effective and inclusive leaders.

Dr. LaShanda Korley: 2022 William W. Grimes Award for Excellence in Chemical Engineering Recipient

Q: Congratulations on being a recipient of the MAC William Grimes Award! In 2022, you also became an APS Fellow and an ACS PMSE Fellow. What would you say are the contributing factors to have come this far in your career?

A: Thank you! I think the strongest aspect is mentorship, and it comes from building your networks early on. The MAC within AIChE has been a foundation for that. I remember as a graduate student participating, meeting people, and making connections. So, the mentorship and network building that comes from programs, affinity groups, and community groups like MAC is very important.

I also think that it's important to be resilient and to recognize that, in terms of being awarded different honors, like this Grimes Award or the APS Fellow and the PMSE Fellow, is about the long journey; understanding where you want to go, building the network and the pieces to start that journey and see yourself in these spaces. I always encourage younger people, such as early career faculty and students to see where they want to go, envision that, and then work toward that goal. Again, being true to who you are, being resilient, having strong mentorship, and enlisting advocates are extremely important.

Q: MAC is now a broader AIChE community, what does this mean for MAC's impact?

A: The name change to me represents a step change in impact and vision for the future of chemical engineering. It is important that the MAC offers an inclusive and supportive environment for diverse groups within the chemical engineering community. Building a community of engaged scholars who identify around specific challenges, struggles, and interests, and striving toward a common goal are the hallmarks of what drew me to MAC as a graduate student. Emphasizing community translates to building a more inclusive and welcoming platform that embraces and supports minoritized groups within Chemical Engineering.

Q: In what ways do MAC and AIChE need to make more progress in serving engineers underrepresented in the profession?

A: I think there is a real need to be more inclusive. Again, I was fortunate to have great mentors who have advocated and supported me throughout my career. Building bridges, fostering inclusivity, and engaging in dialogue around sustained support of minoritized are critical. We must say, "You belong here. We see you and are committed to your growth and development". With this framework, more early career engineers will engage in AIChE, serve as role models, and attain leadership positions. A more inclusive AIChE, is a better AIChE for all. Chemical engineers advance the world; let's continue that advancement as a community committed to building inclusivity and advocacy for all.

Dr. Juan Tuberquia: 2022 MAC Eminent Engineer Award Recipient



Q. Hello Dr. Tuberquia, can you tell us about yourself and What influenced your choice of chemical engineering as your career path?

A: First, thank you very much for the opportunity. It is a pleasure for me to receive this important recognition.

I am a chemical engineer, currently working at Dow as an R&D leader in the packaging, specialty plastics and hydrocarbon R&D unit. I have been with Dow for 10 years working in R&D with most of my time focused on product development of specialty polyolefins. Throughout this time, I have been fortunate to be part of the innovation cycle all the way from ideation, to prototyping, to scale up and commercialization. A few months ago, I made a transition into people leadership, and currently

have responsibilities for R&D laboratories supporting Dow efforts to deliver sustainable solutions in packaging applications. My decision for chemical engineering was quite simple as it was a career choice that enabled me to bring together my interests in math and chemistry.

Q: Coming from overseas to pursue graduate school in the USA, what are some of the challenges that you faced in your career as a chemical engineer, and how did you overcome these?

A: I am from Colombia and obtained my bachelor's degree from the National University of Colombia. I am an enthusiastic learner and as I went through the PhD application process, I felt strongly attracted to the US chemical engineering school.

With the help of my family, friends, and advisor Prof. Kane Jennings, I went on with my Ph.D. journey at Vanderbilt. It was a life-changing experience living away from my family, but on the other hand, it was exciting immersing myself into the American culture and establishing new relationships with a genuine desire to learn. In this process, one of my biggest challenges was improving my communication skills as a Spanish-speaking person. In a personal context, the ability to communicate was vital for me to open a two-way dialogue with my grad school friends to share and learn from our own cultures. From a professional perspective, I quickly became aware of the importance of communication as a vehicle to share complex ideas.

To overcome my communication challenges, I devoted some time to set strong foundations in the English language and had an open attitude for continuous learning. Back in Colombia, I looked for every opportunity to practice by taking notes and reading all my ChemE literature in English. Also looked for various venues to speak in English and I am very fortunate I did as this is how I met my wife in an English class. Once in the US, my focus evolved toward the effectiveness of my message, and I have always looked for continuous improvement by learning key aspects of context and purpose from peers and mentors.

Q: Congratulations on being a recipient of the Eminent Engineer Award! Can you tell us more about the award? What are the key factors that propelled you this far in your career?

A: Thanks! I am excited and humbled for this recognition. This award from MAC is centered around the importance of encouraging the education of underrepresented communities in engineering and related disciplines.

Dr. Juan Tuberquia: 2022 MAC Eminent Engineer Award Recipient

The award highlights both the importance of outstanding technical accomplishments and distinguished service to the profession.

From a technical perspective, as a researcher, I had the opportunity to be intimately involved in the full production and scale-up at Dow's world-scale commercial facilities. My research has focused into high-temperature polymerization catalysis and the resulting polyolefin elastomer products for use in power transmission and solar encapsulation applications. This knowledge is now being leveraged across our business and has had significant impact on projects involving not just polymers used for electrical insulation but also static charge dissipation and how to design the next generation of olefin polymerization catalysts. This body of work has resulted in 13 external publications and 12 US patent applications.

From the perspective of community and service, I am passionate about science and acknowledge the importance of proactively create connection points or experiences to help motivate a perspective into STEM opportunities. At Vanderbilt, I taught STEM subjects to students grade 7- 12 in their Summer Academy Programs for Talented Youth and as a postdoc, I was part of the Fisk University-Vanderbilt Master's-to-PhD Bridge Program to improve engagement of underrepresented minority students in PhD-level STEM research. At Dow, I am part of HLN (Hispanic Latin network), an employee resource group, where I help coordinate events to increase engagement of employees in pro of an inclusive culture. Also, I am in the planning committee of the BEST symposium, a yearly event intended to introduce Black, Latinx, Native American U.S. doctoral and postdoctoral scientists to the wide range of rewarding careers in industrial research.

Q: You have enjoyed about a decade of successful career at DOW, any advice for young chemical engineers looking to achieve a fulfilling career in industry?

A: Thanks. There are multiple approaches to define what a fulfilling career should be about. In my case, a couple of aspects that have guided my career progression have been a focus on building skills and learning. It is important in today's environment to understand the purpose of the various functions in an organization and establish not only what areas could be of interest for young engineers, but what skills are required to secure opportunities and contribute to the bottom line.

In this context, I would highly encourage young engineers to take advantage of coaching and other networking opportunities to have a practical understanding of both strengths and gaps in their skill portfolio.

With such diagnostics, we can then follow our curiosity and interests to look for opportunities to learn new competences. This is going to require us to step out of our area of comfort, but it is an effective way to grow and define what success means at a personal and professional level.

Q: In what ways can chemical engineers in industry be leveraged to contribute to the mission of MAC in serving underrepresented engineers in the profession?

A: MAC's mission is vital as it creates a connecting pathway for underrepresented engineers to grow and celebrate the merits of a diverse workforce. In this context, Chemical engineers in the industry can help fuel a virtuous cycle starting with opening the doors for recruitment and development, going all the way to highlight the reputation of underrepresented talent. It is an exciting time to be a Chemical engineer and contribute to the evolution towards Industry 4.0 and other technology advancements. Connecting the exceptional contributions of underrepresented engineers with the delivery of such technology milestones are a perfect opportunity to inspire and drive change in our communities.

2022 MAC Awards/Scholarships

MAC DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

This award recognizes an AIChE member for sustained service and outstanding achievements that advance the goals of the Minority Affairs Committee.

- ❖ **Dr. Sheena Reeves**
(Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering at Prairie View A&M University)
- ❖ **Dr. Audie Thompson**
(Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering at University of Arkansas)

Janice Lumpkin Travel Award

- ❖ **Steven Chavez**
(Ph.D. Candidate, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at Stanford University)
- ❖ **Jessica Torres**
(Ph.D. Candidate, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at Purdue University)
- ❖ **Sopuruchukwu Ezenwa**
(Ph.D. Candidate, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at Purdue University)
- ❖ **Raisa Carmen Ademe Ela**
(Ph.D. Candidate, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at University of Minnesota)

MAC Poster Award Winners

- ❖ **Efrain Rodriguez-Ocasio (1st place)**
PhD student at Iowa State University
Bioconversion of Plastic Wastes into Value-Added Products Using Thermal Oxo Degradation.
- ❖ **Lawrence Ajayi (2nd place)**
PhD student at Ohio University
Bench-Scale Testing of Electrochemical Recovery of Phosphorus from Post-Digester Municipal Wastewater Driven by Magnesium Salt.
- ❖ **Gbolade Kayode (3rd place)**
PhD student at Tulane University
Transfer Learning Framework for Catalysis.

2022 MAC Awards/Scholarships

MAC Scholarship Awards for College Students/Freshmen

Funded by the Henry T. & Melinda C. Brown Endowment for the Education of Underrepresented Minority Chemical Engineers

- ❖ Rosario Lopez-Roca Fernandez, The University of Texas at San Antonio
- ❖ Andres Caceres, North Carolina State University
- ❖ Samuel Berkebile, California Baptist University
- ❖ Hedges Onye-Franklin, Prairie View A&M University
- ❖ Ronald Edwards II, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- ❖ Ijeoma Eziri, University of Pennsylvania
- ❖ Alexander Arango, University of Dubuque
- ❖ Maneul Vinson, N/A
- ❖ Gianah Rivera, University of Texas at Austin
- ❖ Dominique Mahoner, Bucknell University
- ❖ Moussa Ndiaye, California Polytechnic San Luis Obispo
- ❖ Armarni Hall, Northeastern University
- ❖ Tyler Void, North Carolina State University
- ❖ Trinity Coates, Syracuse University
- ❖ Kayla Freeman, Prairie View A&M University
- ❖ Lupita Herrera, University of Houston
- ❖ Victoria Taylor, Mississippi State University
- ❖ Sara Mittman, UCLA Samueli School of Engineering
- ❖ Hatice Kurt, Koç University
- ❖ Andrea Green, Georgia Institute of Technology
- ❖ Oluwatumininu Alade, Prairie View A&M University
- ❖ Maneul Vinson, Durham Technical Community College
- ❖ Diana Alvarado, New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology



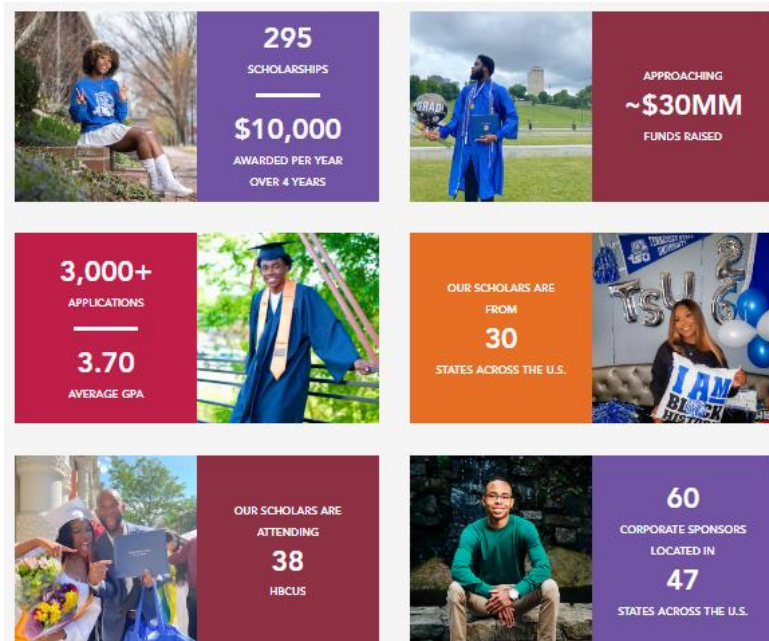
George Rivers
FOSSI Scholar,
Class of 2021
Virginia State
University



ARE YOU A FUTURE FOSSI SCHOLAR?

“Recognizing a lack of diversity throughout the STEM workforce, in November of 2020, the American Chemistry Council (ACC), American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE), Chemours and HBCU Week Foundation partnered to establish the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative (FOSSI). Sponsored by chemical manufacturers and related industry stakeholders, FOSSI provides scholarship recipients \$10,000 per year for four years, helping to eliminate financial barriers for historically under-represented groups.”

2024 FOSSI applications will open on September 22, 2023.



Learn more at
<https://futureofstemscholars.org/fossi>



FOSSI
WEBSITE



INTRODUCING
FOSSI



FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS



Carlos M. Rinaldi-Ramos, Ph.D.
(Chair)

Dr. Carlos M. Rinaldi-Ramos is the Chair and Dean's Leadership Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering and Professor in the J. Crayton Pruitt Family Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Florida. He received his bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez, and completed degrees in Master of Science in Chemical Engineering, Master of Science in Chemical Engineering Practice, and Doctor of Philosophy in Chemical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Prior to the University of Florida, Dr. Rinaldi-Ramos was a Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez (UPRM). Dr. Rinaldi-Ramos's research spans synthesis and characterization of magnetic nanoparticles for biomedical applications and evaluation of nanoparticle transport and diffusion in biological fluids. Current efforts focus on developing tracers and applications for magnetic

particle imaging (MPI), an exciting new biomedical imaging modality that allows for non-invasive, unambiguous, and quantitative imaging of the in vivo distribution of superparamagnetic iron oxide nanoparticle tracers. Dr. Rinaldi-Ramos is committed to mentoring new generations of scientists and engineers seeking solutions to biomedical problems and to broadening participation of women and minorities in science and engineering. Dr. Rinaldi-Ramos is a Fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineers (AIMBE), the Society of Rheology (SoR), and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Dr. Rinaldi-Ramos currently serves as Chair of the Minority Affairs Community of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE).

Tayo Femi-Fowode is a passionate Chemical Engineer with over 15 years of corporate and leadership experience. He is currently an Operations Leader for GE Vernova, GE's portfolio of energy businesses where he is responsible for operationalizing tools, processes, and interfaces needed to execute Global Customer Service Engineering workstreams. Prior to that, he led the digital adoption of Asset Performance Management (APM) for GE Gas Power Fleet Management business where he drove digital integration of monitored turbines, generators and other equipment to minimize downtime, optimize plant performance and save operating cost for more than 950 power plants in 75 countries and serving 350 million people worldwide.

Tayo is a senior member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and currently serving as Chair-elect for Minority Affairs Community (MAC). Prior to that, he served as MAC's Treasurer from 2019 - 2022. He has also volunteered in different capacity amongst which are the MAC Real Talk Speed Mentoring and AIChE's apprentice program where he worked with other young professionals to foster STEM education in the Houston community with K-12 students. Tayo is a recipient of Janice Lumpkin Award and a two-time recipient of the MAC-AIChE College Students Scholarship while studying as an undergraduate.

Tayo graduated from Prairie View A&M University, magna cum laude, with a Bachelor's in Chemical Engineering. He also holds a Master's in Chemical Engineering and an MBA both from Columbia University in the City of New York. Tayo enjoys mentoring young professionals and spending time with his wife and daughters.

Dr. Manuela A.A. Ayee-Leong serves as an Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering at Dordt University, a primarily undergraduate institution in Northwest Iowa. She obtained her baccalaureate at Dordt and earned her master's and Ph.D. degrees in Chemical Engineering from Iowa State University and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), respectively. After completing an NIH Pulmonary and Critical Care Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Medicine at UIC, she began her position at Dordt University in 2018. Her research interests involve the use of both computational and experimental methods to elucidate the molecular mechanisms underlying cell membrane biomechanical



Tayo Femi-Fowode,
(Chair-Elect)



Manuela Ayee-Leong,
Ph.D.
(Past-Chair)

modulation in pathophysiological contexts. In addition to research and teaching, she has a significant interest in supporting students from traditionally underrepresented groups in STEM by facilitating initiatives to ensure their academic success. Consequently, she actively works to foster an educational environment where the recruitment and retention of academically talented students from traditionally underrepresented groups, first generation, and lower income communities is prioritized. One such initiative is the NSF-funded S-STEM "RU-STEM Scholars Program", administered by Dr. Ayee-Leong (PI), which awards annual tuition scholarships and uses evidence-based practices to foster academic success and build STEM identity among cohorts of scholars. She also serves as the faculty sponsor of the Women in Science and Engineering club on campus and on the Graduate Studies Committee. Dr. Ayee-Leong is a senior member of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) and recently completed a year-long term as the Chair of the Minority Affairs Community (MAC) at AIChE. She now serves as the 2023 Past-Chair of MAC as well as an elected Trustee of the CACHE Corporation, which promotes the development and distribution of computer-related and technology-based educational aids for the Chemical Engineering profession.

Dr. Karen Romero is the current Secretary of The Minority Affairs Committee of AIChE. Ph.D. in Engineering, Former Process Engineer/Project Engineer at Pequiven and PDVSA Former Aspen Technology Business Consultant. Over 20 years of expertise in the oil and gas and petrochemical sectors, assisting, researching, and assessing operational constraints and revamping, including health, safety, and environmental tools to increase production while minimizing incidents, utilities, and maintenance costs. Professor and Advisor. International Speaker. Remote Mentoring. Currently working as a Safety Process Engineer at Exida. Resides in Memphis, Tennessee, the "Home of the Blues & Birthplace of Rock 'n' Roll. She always striven to enhance her leadership and teamwork abilities, thus in her spare time she is an editor of a journal of scientific and engineering research and the secretary of the Minority Association Committee of Chemical Engineers"



Karen Romero, Ph.D.
(Secretary)

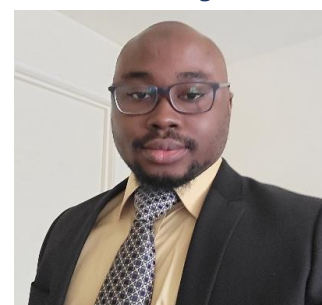


Damilola Daramola,
Ph.D. (Secretary)

Dr. Damilola Daramola is an assistant Professor in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering and Assistant Director at the Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment, both at Ohio University. Dr. Daramola's group – the REPRODUCE lab – works in areas related to wastewater remediation, thermoset composites and polymer upcycling using a combination of electrochemical engineering, materials synthesis and atomic and process simulations. Dr. Daramola earned his B.S. (2004) and Ph.D. (2011) in Chemical Engineering from Ohio University. Since becoming tenure-track faculty at Ohio University in 2020, Dr. Daramola, has been awarded a \$2.5M grant from the U.S. Department of Energy (2021, Principal Investigator) focused on electrochemical nutrient recovery from municipal wastewater facilities and the Ralph E. Powe Junior

Faculty Enhancement Award from the Oak Ridge Associated Universities Consortium (2022). Aside from serving as the current MAC treasurer, Dr. Daramola is serving on the communications team for the second year and has assisted with judging the MAC poster session at the Annual Meeting

Dr. Azeem Farinmade is from Lagos, Nigeria. He is currently an R&D Engineer at Intel Corporation in Hillsboro Oregon. Prior to that he completed his PhD in Chemical Engineering at Tulane University in May 2022. During his PhD, he interned as an R&D Engineer at Cummins Inc. and SC Johnson Inc. Azeem became a member of MAC in November 2018 and joined the communications team as a volunteer. He was nominated as the Communications officer for MAC in December 2021 and has since been leading the communications team. Azeem enjoys travelling, playing soccer, and reading.



Azeem Farinmade, Ph.D.
(Communications Chair)

Join us in May to hear from your MAC leadership and influence the direction of the Community

As a member of the Minority Affairs Community, you are invited to the first community wide meeting of this year.

During this event, you will hear from the MAC Executive Leadership, and there will be open discussions on how this community should be progressed. We will be holding this meeting twice to optimize availability for our members. **The first meeting will be held on Zoom at 12:00 PM EST on Thursday, May 18th, and the second meeting will be held on Zoom at 6:00 PM EST on Tuesday, May 23rd.**

Please use the links below to register for the meeting at your preferred time.

[Thursday, May 18, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM EST](#)

[Tuesday, May 23, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM EST](#)

If you are not already a member of the Minority Affairs Community, you can join now at [this link!](#)

Thank you, and we hope to hear from you soon!

Carlos Rinaldi-Ramos, 2023 MAC Chair

LatinX in ChE

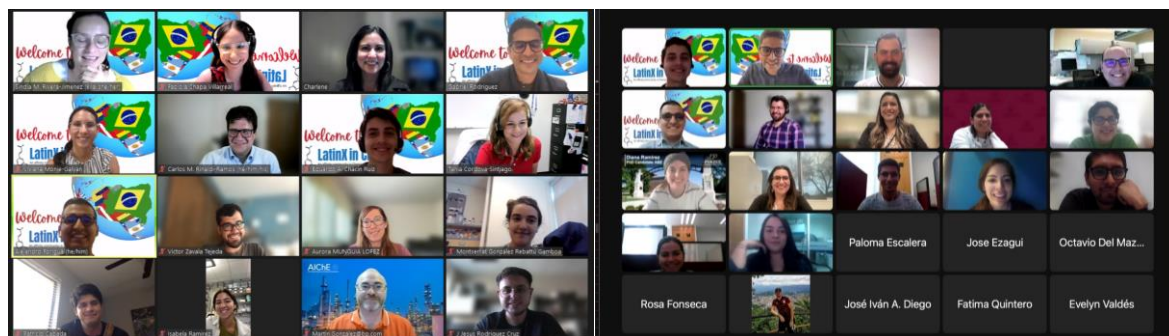
An Affinity Community within MAC

We are excited to share that the LatinXinChE initiatives started in Spring 2022, this being the one-year first anniversary of this community. Dr. Lydia Contreras, a Professor and Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity at the University of Texas at Austin, was the keynote speaker at the virtual kickoff meeting. After that, we organized multiple virtual meetings and workshops with speakers from academia and industry. Last year we celebrated our first in-person meeting during the AIChE Annual Meeting. Over 75 people attended our Café with LatinXinChE session during the meeting.

This Spring, we continue doing multiple virtual activities to serve our members, including collaborations LatinXinBME community and a Rapid Fire session with presenters with 21 presenters from different institutions across the USA and Mexico. We look forward to continuing expanding supporting the LatinX community at AIChE and collaborations with other MAC communities.



Café with LatinXinChE at 2022 AIChE Annual Meeting



Participants in LatinXinChE virtual meetings



LatinX in ChE invites members of MAC and allies across AIChE to its upcoming events. Join us to learn more about LatinX in ChE and network with your colleagues.

- ❑ **August:** Virtual Symposium: Research *advances and contributions of LatinX Chemical Engineers*.
- ❑ **September:** Thinking about graduate school – Workshop to help prepare for the transition and discuss opportunities.
- ❑ **October:** Joint panel of different LatinX communities in STEM (Heritage Month).
- ❑ **November:** AIChE Annual Meeting.
 - ❑ Technical Session at Annual Conference (*LatinX Voices in ChE Research*).
 - ❑ Cafe with LatinX at Annual Conference.
- ❑ **December:** Holiday Social.

For more information about these upcoming events, follow the LatinX in Che social media platforms using these links.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LatinXinChE>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/latinxinche/>

All Social Media: <https://linktr.ee/latinxinche>

Looking forward to connecting with you.

Gabriel Rodriguez, 2023 LatinX in ChE Chair

Get Involved with MAC

Join the MAC Slack Workspace



Join and interact with the MAC community through our slack channel. We have channels tailored to college students, graduate students, faculty, and young professionals with many more to come. Slack is an informal community for members to chat, learn about new opportunities and make new connections. [Click here to join!](#)

Stay connected through our website and social media platforms.



Minority Affairs Community (MAC) of AIChE

<https://www.aiche.org/community/sites/committees/minority-affairs>



Minority Affairs Community (MAC) of AIChE

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6646841/>



[@aichemac](#)



[@MACAIChE](#)

If you are not already a member of the Minority Affairs Community, you can join now at [this link!](#)





Azeem Farinmade, Ph.D.
(Communications Chair)
Packing R&D Engineer
Intel Corporation



Siphon Ndlela, Ph.D.
Chemical Engineer



Motunrayo Ogunleye
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at Tulane University



Damilola Daramola, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
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Engineering at Ohio
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Busayo Alagbe
PhD candidate
at Tulane
University



Shamim Nabila, Ph.D.
Assistant professor
Chemical Engineering at
Prairie View A & M University



Francis Chukwunta
PhD Candidate at
Oregon State
University



Kerri Lee Chintersingh, Ph.D.
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Associate Professor
Chemical Engineering at
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Jude Phillip, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Biomedical Engineering at
The Johns Hopkins University

**Special thanks to the communications team and AIChE staff
Bryan Deschamps and Gina Gatto for their contributions!**