

George A. Smith
Co-founder, National Society of Black Engineers



In 1971, George Antoin Smith Jr. graduated from Chicago's famed Lindblom Technical High School. Next, George attended Purdue University where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering. He had the unique good fortune of attending Purdue with 5 of his closest friends from his Chicago Public School System experience. Their freshman year in engineering school proved to be quite a milestone year as they became six of the twenty-eight Black freshmen who were the first to benefit from the newly formed Black Society of Engineers. During their Junior year at Purdue, George and his friends assumed the leadership positions of the association they renamed, the Society of Black Engineers (SBE).

1973 became a foundational year for the Purdue SBE Chapter, Mr. Smith served as the SBE Secretary, Chair of the Publications Committee, Cover Designer of the Cornerstone Newsletter, and the Artist of the Society of Black Engineers Logo. He found the two mailing lists that were used to invite engineering students from across North America to Purdue University for the founding conference of the National Society of Black Engineers. On April 12, 1975, George Smith served as one of the six regional moderators of the historic vote to unite Blacks from other engineering colleges for the single purpose of becoming the National Society of Black Engineers.

From 1986 to 1991, while employed as a District Manager with Hewlett Packard, George served as a Mentor on the Purdue NSBE Industrial Advisory Board. George wrote five articles that were published in Purdue's NSBE Echo newsletter. In his article published in the 1988-1989 edition of the NSBE ECHO, titled "The Environment that Led to the Founding of NSBE", Mr. Smith first described himself and his founding colleagues as the "Chicago Six". It was an unintentional nickname that has endured to this very day.

During his career in Corporate America, George held positions in Test Engineering at General Motors, Quality Engineering at General Electric, and Field Engineering with the Hewlett-Packard (HP) Electronic Components Group. At HP Mr. Smith also held the District Manager position, in which he was responsible for hiring, training, coaching, and managing HP Field Engineers assigned to seven States in the Midwestern Sales Region. George Smith's career achievements at HP were honored in 1989 when the HP Founders, Bill Hewlett and David Packard, personally presented him with the HP President's Club Award, the highest honor offered within Hewlett-Packard's worldwide Sales Organization.

In 1995 Mr. Smith's reputation as an American thought leader and influencer was demonstrated by the two books, he authored that were published by the American Society for Quality (ASQ).

1. Sales Productivity Measurement
2. The Sales Quality Audit

Both books were best sellers for ASQ in their category.

George Antoin Smith retired from For-Profit work in 2015. Since then, he has been an eager volunteer with several Non-Profit STEM Career focused organizations. His many roles include guest speaker for Chicagoland NSBE Chapters, Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago

Engineers' Foundation, and the Indian Prairie School District in the Western Suburbs of Chicago.

Over a 5-year period, George served as a Business Plan Mentor for the Westside Forward Entrepreneurship Training Program. In that role he helped 11 rising entrepreneurs write their Business Plans.

For the better part of 2 years Mr. Smith also served as the Principal Writer of the successful nomination of [Dr. Patricia Bath](#), the trailblazing inventor of 3 Laser Cataract Surgery devices. Altogether, Dr. Bath obtained five US and International patents on her inventions. On May 5th, 2022, Dr. Bath became the first of two African American women to be inducted into the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's National Inventors Hall of Fame. George and his wife Stephanie, attended Dr. Bath's induction ceremony in Washington D.C. (<https://www.invent.org/inductees/patricia-bath>)

Since 2019, Mr. Smith has served as a member of the Alumni/Associate Committee of the Chicago Engineers' Foundation, as a member of the [Black Inventors Hall of Fame Museum](#) Board, and as the initiator of the NSBE History Founding Archive Collection Team (F.A.C.T). The FACT Committee was the primary source for the 1970's NSBE artifacts and NSBE Timeline content for the NSBE Legacy Museum which was unveiled during the 50th Anniversary NSBE GOLD Conference. From March 5 - 9, 2025, 18,000 middle school, collegiate, and NSBE Alumni Professionals along with Corporate Engineering Recruiters attended Chicago's McCormick Place Convention Center to participate in the milestone conference.

Corporate Recognition:

* 1989 Hewlett-Packard Presidents Club Honoree.

Community Service Recognition:

- * 1999 Purdue Engineering Alumni Service Award for his participation in founding NSBE
- * 2013 Mentor of the Year Award for the Entrepreneurship Training Bethel New Life
- * 2019 Chicago Engineers' Foundation Distinguished Engineer Alumnus Award
- * 2022 Reengineer Magazine named George Antoin Smith a STEM Pioneer Honoree
- * 2023 George Smith was appointed to the Black Inventors Hall of Fame Museum Board
- * 2023 Purdue Black Alumni Organization Pathfinding Men Award
- * 2024 IL SD 204 Parent Diversity Advisory Council Liaison Team Leadership Award
- * 2025 The Infinite Hope Scholarship Foundation 2025 Tech Trailblazer Award
- * 2025 Purdue University's Distinguished Engineering Alumni/Alumnae Award

George Antoin Smith is also the Author of "A Convergence of Will". A non-fiction book about the untold stories of how NSBE was founded and the array of members, allies, and advocates who helped to bring NSBE out of the incubator during its initial years of existence.