Black@Mac Eng

An Integrated Recruitment and Career Advising Model

Jodi-Anne Buckley
May 14, 2025

Brighter World | McMaster University

Black Outreach in STEM Series

A Collaborative Approach

- Developed in collaboration with the Community Outreach team BOSS is an enriching educational program for Black youth, led by the Engineering Student Recruitment and Community Outreach unit.

- The goal is to promote Black youth to take a leap into STEM and begin forging their own path into becoming leaders of innovation! Through the facilitation of culturally relevant engineering workshops, students can celebrate their Black identities and make meaningful connections to STEM education.

Outcomes

Transforming Futures

- Hosted school groups from across Southern Ontario and beyond. With over 1,000 participants in the first year
- Featured in Professional Engineers of Ontario Summer 2024 magazine
- Highlighted in publications like the Hamilton Spectator
- ACTUA 2023 award for STEM programming for Black youth
- Development of a recruitment pipeline from BOSS to Mac Eng

Over

3,000

Participants since 2023 launch

Recruitment

Domestic and International Efforts

- Launched a tailored recruitment strategy to support Black prospective students, locally and internationally
- Pioneered in-person recruitment efforts in the Caribbean, a first for the Faculty of Engineering
- Designed and delivered customized virtual and in-person programs to engage Black applicants
- Initiated the Black@Mac Eng Newsletter to foster community and keep students informed and connected

Outcomes

Impact & Growth Highlights

- **Significant growth in self-identifying Black leads, applicants, and offers**
- **Marked increase in applicants, offers, and confirmations** in the first year of the initiative
- **Consistent upward trends across all four major recruitment metrics**
- **Expanded international reach**, with notable growth in the Caribbean — *Trinidad leading in both applicant and offer volume*
- **Strengthened global presence and visibility** *of the* supportive community at Mac Eng for Black students

161%

increase of Black student confirmation from Fall 2023 entry to Fall 2024

Black@Mac Eng

A Holistic Approach to Career Advising

- Developed a culturally responsive career advising strategy for Black engineering students
- Strengthened the Black@Mac Eng community by fostering mutual support among students, faculty, and staff
- Integrated experiential learning and career development into student programming for post-graduation success

Outcomes

Transforming the Black Student Experience

- **Enhanced sense of belonging and community among Black students, faculty, and staff through Black@Mac Eng—**contributing to increased visibility and success of Black students across the faculty, including greater access to research opportunities, co-op placements, and academic awards.
- **Stronger mentorship networks** formed through reciprocal support within the community (peer-to-peer and faculty-to-student).
- **Revitalization of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) chapter**, fostering renewed student engagement, leadership development, and community-building while re-establishing its presence as a key support network for Black engineering students.
- **Increased visibility and celebration of Black student excellence**, with more intentional spotlights on achievements, leadership, and contributions—actively championed and shared by the Faculty.

Lessons learned, best practices

- Outreach, recruitment, and career advising must be approached as interconnected efforts that work in reciprocal relationship to one another.
- Black prospective and current students have distinct needs, motivations, and lived experiences that must inform the design and delivery of programming intended to support them.
- A holistic approach is essential—recruitment is not solely about admissions, and career advising extends beyond securing a co-op or job; it involves fostering long-term success, belonging, and identity development.