

# Engineering Focus

## Go To School And Make A Difference

by LeEarl A. Bryant, P.E.

(NAPSA)—“Go to school.”

That’s how Shaunna Sowell, a Texas Instruments vice president recently challenged a room full of engineers to make a difference in our public schools. Besides teachers and parents, the next most valuable resource in focusing children on the value of education is volunteers. And there may be no better group of volunteers to take up this challenge than our nation’s engineers.

First, there are still more men in the engineering profession than women. This predominance can be leveraged to provide positive role models for boys who need real-life heroes.

Second, engineers excel in math and science. These subjects are least appreciated by many educators and many young people, especially girls. We need positive role models with strong math and science backgrounds—volunteers who can help answer the age-old questions “Why do I need to study this” and “What makes this so important?”

Third, the outstanding women and minorities represented in this sometimes misunderstood profession can provide educational leadership and become role models for under-represented student populations. Inspiring these groups with the joys of discovering math and science, and showing them the opportunities open to individuals with these skills, can be rewarding.

Finally, I am proud to say that engineers represent some of the most creative thinkers in our society. If educators and engineers cannot illustrate the need for educated, creative thinkers, then who can?

At IEEE-USA, the career enhancement arm of The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, we are doing our part. Our Precollege Education Committee



is made up of volunteers who work to advance the quality of precollege education, and to raise the functional and technological literacy of our students by emphasizing math and science.

All of us can help improve the educational development of young people. If you have some special talent, knowledge or experience you can share, volunteer to go into a school and speak to a class, or offer after-school tutoring. It can be heart-warming to help a child learn to read or better understand a subject.

If you’re a parent, work with your children and their teachers to make education as rewarding and important as possible.

If you’re an educator, continue your own education and find others who will work with you to make a difference in young people’s lives.

If you’re an engineer, leave your cubicle and share your gifts.

“Go to school” doesn’t just apply to students.

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