



## **Search for Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, Inc. (NACME) seeks a leader with strategic vision, operational strength, and passionate commitment to serve as its Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. NACME is an independent, non-profit corporation that focuses on public policy, academic development, research, pre-engineering studies, and scholarship programs in higher education. NACME's mission is to provide leadership and support for the national effort to increase the representation of successful African American, American Indian, and Latino women and men in engineering and technology, math- and science-based careers. While underrepresented minorities have made substantial gains in the field of engineering over the past few decades, minorities as a proportion of all engineering graduates still represent only 12% of the aggregate, a percentage significantly disproportionate to the actual percentage of underrepresented minorities in the U.S. population (27%). More alarming still, only 4% of underrepresented minority recent high school graduates are sufficiently educated to enroll in undergraduate engineering programs. NACME is actively and urgently striving to improve those figures in order to create an engineering and technological workforce that looks like America.

NACME seeks a visionary leader who will bring to the position a high degree of energy, sound judgment, creativity, and integrity and who will exercise a strong managerial leadership style. The ideal candidate is an executive or scholar with demonstrated achievement. Expertise in engineering or the sciences is desirable, and an advanced degree in these fields is a plus. The desired individual will have the analytical skills necessary to identify emerging trends in public policy and engineering education, and the ability to plan and implement proactive initiatives relevant to given and emerging conditions.

The Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer will have a budget responsibility of \$10 million (cash and in-kind support) and a staff responsibility of 18 professional and administrative personnel. S/he will be a force in the engineering education system and, to insure continuing support for the organization, should have ties to corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individuals who share NACME's vision. As Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, the individual shall

have ongoing interactions with corresponding minority professional organizations, education groups, government entities, and other related non-profit organizations.

NACME has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of the Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer. After extensive consultation with NACME's board members, executive leadership, staff, and other stakeholders, the firm has prepared this document, which will be shared with candidates and sources in the search. Relying heavily on NACME's existing materials, this document describes the organization, the challenges facing the Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, and the personal and professional characteristics that the ideal candidate should possess. More information about the organization can be found at [www.NACME.org](http://www.NACME.org).

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***NACME – History and Mission***

In 1974, a group of corporate executives, with the urging of minority leaders, business interests, and the academic community, decided to pool their resources and work toward achieving greater diversity in the field of engineering. At the time, less than 2% of engineering graduates were minorities, a figure markedly out of line with the 19% minority population of college age students. Their efforts resulted in the formation of the National Advisory Council on Minorities in Engineering (NACME). A number of similarly-oriented organizations—the Committee on Minorities in Engineering (CME), the Minority Engineering Education Effort (ME<sup>3</sup>), and the National Fund for Minority Engineering Students (NFMES)—joined with NACME to build the knowledge base and expertise necessary to support this aggressive national effort.

In 1980, the loose association of organizations engaged in a formal merger of NFMES and ME<sup>3</sup> with legal incorporation under NACME. To signify the newly expanded role of the group, “Advisory” was changed to “Action” in the organization's name. The original Advisory Council became NACME's board, and the new corporation assumed many functions of the CME. The mandate of the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering was to conduct ongoing research, to identify the impediments limiting access to careers in engineering, and to implement programs to achieve a technical workforce truly reflective of the American population.

Today, NACME is headquartered in White Plains, New York. Its programs target economically disadvantaged students from underrepresented minority groups (African American, American Indian, and Latino). To fulfill its mission, the organization provides the following services:

- conducts research in higher education
- analyzes and develops public policies

- publishes original education and research materials in a variety of media, including the Internet
- develops and implements enrichment programs in science, mathematics and engineering from the middle school to the university level
- operates scholarship programs on behalf of NACME
- provides scholarship management for other non-profits that capitalize on NACME's expertise with institutions of higher learning

The scholarship programs are comprehensive efforts, delivered in partnership with academic institutions and providing financial aid to students as well as a broad program of support to produce individuals of academic excellence and professional distinction. NACME's research provides direction and ongoing evaluation of the organization's programs and is the major source of analysis on data that focus on national trends regarding access and retention issues in engineering education.

Since 1974, NACME has advanced minority participation in the engineering field by providing over \$85 million in scholarship support and has assisted over 19,000 African American, American Indian, and Latino students to pursue engineering careers. The organization has established an aggressive goal of expanding its annual scholarship support to 1600 students, nearly doubling its existing figure, and of increasing the number of partner institutions by 1/3 of the current number.

### ***Programs***

NACME's programs are divided into five major areas: student scholarships, pre-engineering initiatives, research and policy, outreach activities, and institutional programs.

- ***Scholarships***

NACME's core outreach effort is the awarding of scholarship grants to minority engineering students. An immediate goal of the scholarship initiative is to increase the number of NACME scholarship recipients from this year's projected figure of just over 1000 to 1,600 for the 2009-2010 academic year. The scholarship effort is a proven approach in achieving student retention and performance gains. NACME scholars have achieved a graduation rate of 80% (compared to the national average of 39% for minorities and 62% for all students) and averaged an impressive GPA of 3.2.

- ***Pre-engineering Initiatives***

Financial aid alone, however, will not fulfill the organization's vision of a more diverse engineering workforce. Therefore, NACME strives to build university capability through initiatives directed at increasing student enrollment and retention. Among these are programs that focus on the pre-college development of minority students, such as the NACME Pre-Engineering Studies Strategy, which expands the organization's outreach to

minority communities by targeting students, parents, teachers, schools, local industry, and other relevant stakeholders. NACME is currently working with two other organizations engaged in K-12 education to implement an Academy of Engineering and supplement it with other components of its pre-college initiative. NACME endeavors to see this model evolve into a national network of mostly urban-based high schools that would graduate engineering-eligible, college bound students.

- ***Research and Policy***

NACME conducts research that provides information on and analysis of trends in minority engineering enrollment, retention, graduation, and other key indicators for dissemination to various stakeholders who help set policy to address these areas. Working with leaders in their field, NACME formed the NACME Research and Policy Council to focus attention on the issues of minorities in engineering and to measure progress in student retention, support strategic planning efforts, assess effectiveness of programs, encourage sharing of best practices among institutions, and measure satisfaction levels of program participants.

- ***Outreach Activities***

NACME periodically hosts a National Symposium on issues related to diversity in engineering. The Symposium brings together leaders in government, corporations, universities, community colleges and the foundation community to share information and discuss issues of diversity in engineering education and the workforce.

NACME facilitates interactivity among 40 partner institutions of higher education. The organization sponsors annual workshops, which allow partner institutions to share best practices and offer innovative approaches to recruiting and retaining underrepresented minority students in the institutions' respective engineering programs.

NACME is developing a Community College Strategy to support minority students enrolled in pre-engineering programs at community colleges, and to encourage cooperation between four-year institutions and community colleges that offer pre-engineering curricula.

- ***NACME Scholars Program***

In an effort to increase dramatically the representation of African Americans, American Indians and Latinos in the critical field of engineering, NACME has selected 40 universities to participate in the NACME Scholars Program. This program not only supports the success of NACME scholars, but also builds the participating institutions' capacity to improve their overall minority enrollment and degree-completion rates.

NACME commits grants of at least \$100,000-\$125,000 (\$25,000 released annually) to each institution, which has demonstrated a commitment "from the top" through "the trenches" to diversity in engineering and indeed, campus-wide. The NACME grants help

these institutions recruit and retain to graduation successful minority engineering students. The institutions serve as models of best practices in developing a "culturally competent" campus that welcomes and supports the achievement of all students. Each institution reports annually to NACME on student progress and has pledged to narrow the retention-to-graduation gap. The knowledge gained and lessons learned by these partner institutions are then leveraged through broad dissemination by NACME through its website, special publications, and meetings across the nation.

For the 2005-06 academic year, NACME's institutional partnerships have been expanded to 40 institutions that are dispersed throughout the nation. In selecting Partners, NACME targets institutions in a manner that allows the organization to maximize its access to its minority student constituency. NACME plans to grow the number of partner institutions to 54 by 2010. A current list of NACME's Partner Institutions can be found at <http://www.nacme.org/university/others.html>.

### ***Governance***

NACME is governed by a 38-member Board of Directors composed of high profile and influential leaders who are diverse in occupation and experience but who are united by a shared commitment to the goal of increased participation of minorities in engineering education and the workforce. The organization takes pride in its leadership and boasts having one of the strongest boards in the non-profit sector. NACME's Board of Directors represents business, science, and academia. It convenes twice annually and is structured with five sub-committees that meet quarterly to establish policy and help guide the organization's activities.

### ***Finances***

NACME has regained a solid financial position through successful fundraising and major gift development, and prudent and disciplined fiscal management, following a period of financial challenges resulting from the downturn in the technology industry and the related default on corporate commitments. In FY 2005, expenditures on program and supporting services totaled \$7.7 million. Almost 80% of total operating expenses was spent on program services, with the large majority focused on the organization's core area, scholarship programs, and the remainder expended in other program service areas (education programs and training, information dissemination, and research and policy). Management and administrative costs represented 9% and fundraising costs accounted for 12%. Total assets amounted to \$14.2 million in 2005.

### ***Organizational Structure***

NACME achieves its strategic goals through a committed 18-member staff focused in four major functional areas: resource development, operations, scholar management, and

administration/finance. Fundraising is led by the Vice President of Resource Development, who heads a five-person team focused on securing funds and support from various sources, primarily corporations, who share in the organization's mission. The Senior Vice President of Operations heads a seven-person group and has responsibility for communications, research, pre-engineering programs, and scholarship management. The Vice President of Administration and Chief Financial Officer directs a four-person team that is responsible for NACME's administration and finance functions, including administrative support, office operations, finance, and information technology.

## **THE ROLE**

### ***Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer***

Reporting to the President and Chief Executive Officer, the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (EVP/COO) will have management responsibility for all operations, administrative and programmatic. S/he will lead a team of three direct reports - the Senior Vice President of Operations, the Vice President of Resource Development, and the Chief Financial Officer/Vice President of Administration - and an overall organization of 18 administrative and programmatic professionals. Financial responsibility will include oversight of a \$10 million annual budget (FY06, cash and in-kind support) and a portfolio of NACME assets of approximately \$6 million.

The EVP/COO will manage a broad range of responsibilities, spanning operational and financial management, organizational leadership, programmatic oversight, strategic plan formulation and execution, revenue generation and fundraising, and external relations. The overarching challenge for the new EVP/COO is the definition and implementation of improved internal business systems and processes to best support the organization's mission and strategic direction. Ensuring that human and financial resources are both right-sized and efficiently deployed to advance NACME's mission is central to the EVP/COO's charge. At the same time, NACME is looking to prepare for a leadership succession in the next few years and seeks an EVP/COO with strong strategic capacity, outstanding leadership qualities, excellent communications skills, fundraising capability, and a deep passion for the organization's mission.

The broad challenges of the Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer are therefore to:

- ***Effectively lead and manage internal operations***

NACME seeks to change the face of America's technical workforce and by extension the very nature of American society. Through its partnerships and programs, NACME strives to overcome the traditional barriers that have deterred African American, Latino, and American Indian men and women from pursuing science and engineering careers. To achieve these ambitious goals, NACME must convince its donors and Board of

Directors that its strategies have been thoughtfully defined and are effectively implemented. The first responsibility of the EVP/COO is therefore to ensure that NACME holds itself accountable for results.

The EVP/COO will work to ensure accountability at all levels for the achievement of the organization's strategic objectives. The new executive will direct all strategic and financial planning and reporting processes across the organization, including scholarship, pre-engineering, research, communications, partnership programs, and symposia. The prospective individual will work to design effective systems that enable staff in their work, improve the quality of real-world planning, allocate resources to enhance effectiveness, advance the organizational mission, and monitor for results.

- ***Partner with the CEO***

This is a good moment for the organization to recruit a broadly skilled general management partner to the President, as NACME anticipates a leadership succession in the next few years. NACME seeks an EVP/COO who will take charge of internal tasks - and thereby allow the President/CEO to focus primarily on elevating the organization's national profile - but also possesses the personal qualities and capabilities to collaborate with the President/CEO in developing and enhancing external relations.

The EVP/COO must learn the organization's culture and operations and then build a productive working partnership with the President through credibility, performance, and trust. In the short term, the EVP/COO will collaborate with the President in helping to fulfill two key tasks critical to NACME's success: fundraising and marketing. Ultimately, the EVP/COO will be expected to broaden her/his area of responsibility to work fully side-by-side with the President.

- ***Contribute to the ongoing evolution of NACME's vision and strategy***

NACME has significant strengths and has achieved substantial outreach to minority students. Currently 25% of minority engineering students in the nation are enrolled at NACME Partner Institutions. Looking to the future, NACME recognizes its fuller potential and has as an immediate goal to reach 40% of its targeted base. Beyond this, NACME aspires to even greater heights of achievement.

As a critical new member of the executive team, the EVP/COO will work closely with the President and the Board in the ongoing formulation and refinement of NACME'S strategy. NACME requires a leader who can work creatively, positively, and effectively with a range of internal constituencies and external stakeholders to advance NACME's vision.

- ***Secure and manage financial resources***

Today, NACME relies on stable financial conditions with modest growth in revenue assumptions and high expectations of achievement. As it looks to grow in impact and

reach, NACME needs to augment its financial resources to match its greatest aspirations. It therefore seeks an EVP/COO who can persuasively advocate for its needs and also identify and capture new revenue streams and funding sources, particularly in this climate of shrinking support for race-based educational support programs.

The prospective individual is expected to identify a financial growth model, which reduces the organization's dependency on revenue support from the Board and maximizes creative new sources of income. NACME requires an entrepreneurial individual who is an experienced fundraiser, or has the personal qualities and interests to grow in that leadership dimension, and possesses outstanding financial acumen.

- ***Broadly increase visibility***

NACME seeks to enhance its presence and prominence in line with its many achievements and in pursuit of its mission. NACME works with an extraordinary group of donors, universities, and students, and is engaged with some of the most powerful players in the political, business, higher education, and civic sectors. Looking to the future, NACME hopes to leverage these partnerships to create a heightened level of national recognition and to broaden its national impact.

To elevate NACME's public profile, the new EVP/COO will cultivate close relationships with a variety of external constituencies, in partnership with the President. Jointly, the President and the new EVP/COO will work to promote the achievements of NACME's scholars and to highlight the organization's impact on engineering education and industry on a national scale. To be fully successful now, as well as in the future, the EVP/COO must therefore be adept both inside and outside the organization. NACME requires an EVP/COO with the executive presence, strategic orientation, and communications talents to further its national position and influence.

- ***Expand NACME's national footprint***

NACME serves both students and institutions of learning, the critical elements in its formula to change the demographics of the U.S. engineering and scientific workforce. As part of the senior leadership team, the EVP/COO will strategically expand these two communities in order to amplify NACME's effectiveness.

NACME will also need to expand beyond its current group of university partners, looking at new geographies and institutional categories. NACME desires an EVP/COO who can help plan and then lead the implementation of strategies to increase the organization's national footprint.

- ***Lead and advocate for underrepresented minorities***

NACME has been a leading source of research and data on trends in enrollment, graduation, retention and other issues affecting minority access to engineering. Moving forward, NACME seeks to expand on this aspect of its mission and move more

assertively into the public policy and advocacy realm. As a senior NACME leader, the new EVP/COO will be expected to provide a strong voice for the organization's mission and to bring to bear the force of character and the personal qualities to move NACME to center stage on these core issues. The EVP/COO will be a critical contributor to the policy agenda that is evolving and expanding within NACME.

## **THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE**

The new EVP/COO of NACME will be an accomplished general manager, a dynamic leader, a person of clear and creative vision and demonstrated strategic capacity, with a deeply held conviction for the organization's mission. The EVP/COO may come from a non-profit, public sector, academic, or business background or may bring a blend of experience from these arenas. Defining qualities of the successful candidate will include strategic ability in public mission arenas, entrepreneurial drive, proven organizational, planning and financial skills, outstanding managerial acumen, and exceptional communication skills on issues of public importance. Desirable qualifications include an advanced degree, preferably in engineering and/or science, and a demonstrated capacity for analyzing emerging trends in engineering education, technical workforce growth, and race and ethnicity in higher education and the workplace.

While no one candidate will possess all of them, the successful candidate will bring many of the following qualifications and attributes:

### ***Professional Experience and Personal Qualities***

- Proven general management experience encompassing functions similar to those reporting to this position, in organizations of equivalent or larger scale and complexity, is required, as a chief executive officer, chief operating officer, chief financial officer, executive vice president, or equivalent role;
- A demonstrated ability to develop and understand financial statements and budgets and operations; the capacity to translate financial information clearly and accurately for managerial action;
- Experience leading the alignment of strategy, finance, and operations within a complex organization;
- Outstanding people management skills; manages with both heart and intellect; able to hire, develop, and retain talented people, to establish and uphold high performance standards, to make decisions, and to delegate;

- Demonstrated ability to communicate clearly, both verbally and in writing, in an informed and persuasive manner, to multiple internal and external constituencies; ideally possesses a significant record of publication in mainstream media;
- Proven experience in or the credible capacity for fundraising and major donor development; analogous work in the corporate environment;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills; able to work effectively with a wide variety of people at all levels, to inspire trust, to organize people into effective teams, and to motivate them to work hard and well together;
- A passionate commitment to the advancement of underrepresented minorities in the technical disciplines; able to quickly gain fluency in the relevant scientific and policy issues and contribute at a high level to the programmatic mission of the organization;
- Public presence and keen diplomatic instincts; proven ability to open doors and forge alliances among diverse organizations and individuals; an engaging personality and a natural inclination to circulate, internally and externally;
- Standing in a professional and/or social network that can materially abet the mission of NACME is desirable;
- An advanced degree in engineering or science is strongly preferred;
- Integrity, strong interpersonal skills, and a high level of energy.

The National Action Council on Minorities in Engineering has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist the organization in its identification and review of candidates. Inquiries, referrals, and resumes should be sent with a cover letter by e-mail and in confidence to:

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***NACME IS AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION***