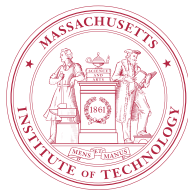


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April 8, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I am providing this letter to endorse the nomination of **Jarrell D. Johnson** for the position of **National Programs Chairperson of the National Society of Black Engineers**. It is my understanding that this recommendation letter is to be provided by "an active NSBE member and/or a past/current NSBE leader." Hence, I write this letter as a past President of the MIT Chapter of NSBE (1992-1993) and in my current capacity as faculty advisor for the Chapter. Additionally, I have had the pleasure of serving with Jarrell on an Institute-wide search committee to select candidates to fill the role of Director of the Office of Minority Education (OME) since last fall.

Jarrell currently serves as Chairperson of the MIT Chapter of NSBE. Speaking from personal experience, this role carries with it a great deal of responsibility. Because MIT is an institution where more than 85% of its undergraduates are enrolled in a STEM discipline, NSBE-MIT plays a central role in the development of our black undergraduate students. The minority community has expanded considerably since my (long ago!) days as an undergraduate, with 21% of students classified as underrepresented and 8% classified as African-American. This provides a very large constituency for which NSBE-MIT creates and maintains programs. The programming of the chapter ranges from student-focused activities designed to increase the academic success and professional readiness of the membership, to PCI activities designed to prepare the next generation of scientists and engineers. As such, the chapter serves both MIT students and the broader community in a technology-focused manner. As Chair of the chapter, Jarrell is responsible for coordinating the activities of the larger group of volunteers who successfully execute programs. The chapter has been successful this year in its programming, and this accomplishment is indicative of Jarrell's effectiveness as a leader. The heavy focus on technology at MIT also places NSBE-MIT into the forefront of broader issues of community among the students, and the role of organizations in facilitating this community. These topics have been the focus of intense discussions among the students this year, and Jarrell has exercised leadership in navigating these complex and, in some cases, very personal issues. In his role as NSBE Chair, Jarrell also serves on the OME Student Advisory Committee (OMESAC), through which he formally interacts with the leaders of the other student groups that seek to serve underrepresented minority students.

I previously mentioned Jarrell's membership on the search committee for the new OME Director. His participation on the committee has been exemplary. He has been engaged in this lengthy (and still on-going) search from the very beginning, providing insightful comments on both the candidates under consideration and the process itself. The committee also relied on his status as a student leader to convene student groups to provide initial input on the search parameters and, more recently, to interview our top candidates. It's also worthwhile to highlight Jarrell's current role as a Student Advocate on MIT's Committee on Academic Performance. Again, I served in this role as an undergraduate and understand well the serious responsibilities entailed. This committee's activities range from considering petitions to drop courses past the official deadline, to discussions of student performance that may carry punitive action up to and including required withdrawal from the Institute. Because of the crucial and confidential nature of the deliberations of the committee, only students of the highest integrity with demonstrated leadership are nominated to serve.

In summary, I believe that Jarrell is an outstanding candidate for National Programs Chair. You can refer to his resume for a long list of leadership roles and accomplishments, including those I've discussed above. His past experiences have clearly demonstrated his ability to serve in this role, and I endorse his candidacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kristala Jones Prather".

Kristala Jones Prather