

Support Systems in Engineering

by Dexter Johnson

There were several professors who helped me. Professor Charlie Fogel was very encouraging, and he played an instrumental part in the minority engineering program. I felt a real bond with him. Also, Dr. James Legge, an African-American professor who was working with BEAM, gave me encouragement, as did Dr. Robert Barnes who was also involved with BEAM.

I didn't like the fact that we didn't have a Student Union – no central location for students to meet. But there were some student organizations, particularly the National Society of Black Engineers, that gave a lot of support and provided camaraderie. I was there when the first chapter was initiated at UB.

In some ways we felt quite isolated as African-American students in engineering (there were very few of us). This group provided both a sense of community and academic support. They gave workshops on resume writing and they had a very large career fair that brought companies on campus.

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