



# CIVIL RENAISSANCE

*An Audacious Plan to  
Re-engineer Equality*

As of February 20, 2022



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## Civil Renaissance

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# INTRODUCTION

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This campaign is inspired by, in honor of and with respect to the phenomenal and brave hearts of the Hampton Veterans Affairs Medical Center women's therapy group. For superficial reasons, I acknowledge I had opportunities they have not, and all of life is about so much more than humbled me. Raise your glasses, please, to making room for a equal representation of more minorities and women in engineering.

Boo, to Civil War! But a **Civil Renaissance?** Yes, please! Who better than engineers to kick launch such an audacious endeavor?

The engineering industries are respectfully requested to please kindly join in designing America's **next big thing:** Equality.

Only together can all of society benefit from the prosperity that will happen when women and minorities are represented equally.

A recent study by the Society of Women Engineers revealed that 30 percent of women engineers leave the profession due to organizational climate. If male engineers can make 1 in 3 female engineers want to leave their jobs, the fact of the problem needs no further evidence.

Fortunately, **solutions** are engineers' specialty.

To launch a Civil Renaissance, two *measurable* key pillars are tentatively proposed, where this Committee will be asked to identify a third or more, by vote. Pay inequality is listed throughout as an example, but without a trusted way to measure and report, such a goal is questionable:

1. Establish ABET-accredited civil/structural and/or mechanical/electrical programs at every HBCU where none exist;
2. Encourage private AEC companies and non-profit industry association boards to have women represent and fill HALF or more of board seats and leadership positions; and
3. Pay positions equally, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, or other irrelevant factors.

None of this can happen without the commitment of today's male engineering community.

If you are reading this, consider yourself invited to please kindly join in leading a **Civil Renaissance: An Audacious Plan to Re-engineer Equality.**

This Plan is a living document, a modifiable launch pad to the future of our dreams.

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Achieving a Civil Renaissance toward engineered equality will, foremost, require the participation of men. Women alone will not be able to change the systems, behaviors and reality that face them.

Please considering thinking of this initiative in terms of what men may gain, as the overall results stand to be so much larger, grander, and more audacious than all prior achievements and expectations. Still, a recent McKinsey & Company study proves: "*The most diverse companies are now more likely than ever to outperform less diverse peers on profitability.*"

- **Opportunity:** The problem this Civil Renaissance effort will solve is inequality of gender and race in the "infrastructure" (civil / structural / mechanical / electrical) engineering industry. Because it essentially designs society, the engineering industry is vital to modernize. Engineering and engineers also have the power to affect most all other industries, such as construction, and government.
- **Mission:** This Civil Renaissance mission is to design a more fair and just human environment where every person has fair and equal representation, beginning from and leading within the engineering industry.
- **Solution:** Three pillar projects are tentatively initially proposed.
- **Market focus:** The private sector engineering industry that designs and delivers transportation, water, schools, and other such infrastructure for communities.
- **Competitive advantage:** THIS is the *only* group who can accomplish this essential mission. Choosing not to accept it ensures the continuity of social inequality. Change is hard. Only you can do this.
- **Ownership:** The major stakeholders in this organization should be: Board members, Presidents, and leadership of America's top ENR-listed firms; CEOs and leadership of these top professional engineering associations; select U.S. Representatives from applicable House Committees, such as Education; select academics from Higher Education institutions; and select media, to include ENR.
- **Outcomes:** Some short-term goals include ensuring minorities are represented in equal ratios among the licensed workforce; and equal representation of women on the boards of engineering firms and associations. Long-term outcomes will be equality, community peace, prosperity, and justice—and love—for all.

## 2. ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

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A detailed list follows. Broadly, the invited stakeholders to this organization are:

1. The leadership of America's top 10 ENR-listed firms;
  2. The top staff and elected leadership of top professional engineering associations;
  3. Select U.S. Representatives from applicable House Committees, such as Education;
  4. Select academia from Higher Education institutions; and
  5. Select media, to include ENR.
- **Organization summary:** The overarching goal of Civil Renaissance is to broaden the intelligence base of the engineering community by ensuring women and minorities assume more rightful leadership positions, and associated salaries.
  - **Mission statement:** This Civil Renaissance mission is to design a more fair and just human environment, beginning with the engineering industry.
  - **Operational structure:** This organization will be all volunteer. All time and resources for conducting business will rely on the generous support of participants, and the goodwill of the engineering community and industries at large.

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Participants invited to the launch:

## Associations

ABET  
ACEC  
ASCE  
ASHRAE  
ASME  
IEEE-USA  
NCEES  
NSBE  
NSPE  
SHPE  
SWE  
WEPAN

## Top 10 Companies

AECOM  
Burns & McDonnell  
Fluor  
HDR  
Jacobs  
Stantec Inc.  
Tetra Tech  
Wood  
Worley  
WSP USA

## Legislators

Rep. Jamaal Bowman  
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Rep. Bobby Scott  
Rep. Frederica Wilson

## Higher Education

Dawit Haile, *Virginia State University College of Engineering and Technology, Dean*  
Pamela Leigh-Mack, *Virginia State University Department of Engineering, Chair*  
Jennifer Widom, *Stanford University School of Engineering, Dean*

## Media

ENR  
Huffington Post  
NBC Universal

*Listed alphabetically.*

### 3. CHALLENGE ANALYSIS

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A [2015 National Science Foundation report](#) showed women constituted only 28% of workers in science and engineering occupations, although they accounted for half of the college-educated workforce overall. Where some other industries are opening to women, engineering keeps shutting them down and out.

Before you suggest men are just better at math, know that studies prove that old husband's tale false, a trope that continues to discourage. One discovery was that elementary teachers (male and female ones equally) actually call on boys more often during math lessons, a seemingly small fact that alone instills more confidence and encouragement in male students. Frankly, it's sexual discrimination to suggest men are better at math. They only appear "better" because men made the system that perpetuates what they have established.

At the country's top 10 engineering firms, women constitute 50 percent of the board at just one engineering firm—Jacobs. This means men are not just running the companies and paying themselves better while writing off the cost on their taxes, but men are also designing all of the systems for men. These systems establish what maternity care looks and feels like, for example. There is very little of life is designed or engineered by or for women. Which explains why women are not and may never be equal, much less get ahead, or be in charge of their fate.

In the same way white male sexism still keeps many women from practicing engineering, systemic design keeps minorities from learning the joy of being able to originate essential life support systems for our communities, like fresh water, power, and transportation. The engineering industry is woefully lacking in diversity when it comes to ethnicities. Among those top 10 engineering companies, three boards are all white people, and three others have just one non-white male board member.

In Virginia Beach, a tragic shooting in City offices by a City engineer was proven to be [caused by racism](#). Not perceived racism. Actual, measurable, demonstrable racism. The financial deprivation of a person, because of their skin color.

White male engineering company owners will cry, "But there are no licensed minorities to hire." This too is a white-man-made problem.

As you are likely aware, without ABET accreditation, graduates of certain programs do not qualify for licensure, and therefore fail to progress professionally. In the Commonwealth of Virginia today, not a single Historically Black College or University (HBCUs) has an ABET-

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accredited civil engineering program. Of course, there is a huge distinction between software engineering and electrical engineering that qualifies a person to design distributed power.

Here are three suggestions to help the engineering industry evolve into one that represents society:

1. Establish ABET accredited civil/structural and/or mechanical/electrical programs at at least one HBCU in every state where HBCU's exist;
2. Encourage AEC companies and non-profit industry association boards to have women represent and fill HALF or more of board seats and leadership positions; and
3. Pay all employees equally, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, or other irrelevant factors.

## 4. OPERATING PLAN

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At the launch meeting, participants will be asked to brainstorm and finalize the third and any other essential goals, and more importantly, volunteer for one of the key subcommittees below:

- **ABET@ every HBCU.** At its initial meeting, this subcommittee's members will be identified, and a tactics and action plans developed at subsequent meetings.
- **Women on Boards.** At its initial meeting, this subcommittee's members will be identified, and a tactics and action plans developed at subsequent meetings.
- **Pay Equity.** At its initial meeting, this subcommittee's members will be identified, and a tactics and action plans developed at subsequent meetings.

An organization chart of members will be shared post-launch.

Participants recognize and acknowledge their participation is at their own expense, or that of their company or association.

Each subcommittee will then select follow-up monthly meeting date(s), where it will begin to develop tactics, actions, and deadlines for mission completion.

It is anticipated that subcommittees will meet monthly toward plan progression; and the full committee will meet quarterly. In months where the full committee meets, subcommittees may or may not use the full committee meeting as and for business voting and decisions where appropriate.

Below are proposed full committee meeting dates for the first 2022 year of ad hoc operation:

Launch Meeting:	March 30
Quarterly Meeting:	June 29
Quarterly Meeting:	September 29
Quarterly Meeting:	January 11, 2023

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## 5. MARKETING AND SALES PLAN

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Currently, all efforts for Civil Renaissance are hosted at cindykstone.com. However, it is hoped and planned that appropriate industry partners will take ownership and leadership of the mission, post kickoff. All plan materials developed to date are considered by the author to be public information, and will be shared with the committee as a starting point toward progress.

- **Key messages:** To be refined by this ad hoc committee, an initial proposed key message for Civil Renaissance may be, “Re-engineering equality to elevate communities.”
- **Marketing activities:** The following promotional opportunities may be exercised, dependent on in-kind donations and corporate sponsorships, and budget.
  - In-kind or earned media advertising (newspaper, magazine, television, radio), especially on channels and outlets managed by participating organizations
  - Seminars or business conferences, free informational talks at appropriate events
  - Joint advertising with member companies
  - Digital marketing such as social media, email marketing, or blogging
  - Telephone solicitation
  - Word of mouth
  - Other tactics, to be identified by subcommittees
- **“Sales” strategy:** The approach and strategy this endeavor will rely on is the inspired efforts of its volunteer membership. In short, leadership.

Leadership got us here. Only leadership can make possible a Civil Renaissance.

## **6. FINANCIAL PLAN**

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This Civil Renaissance plan will happen through the volunteer efforts, and generous support and contributions of the participating engineering firms, non-profit associations, media, higher education, and any others.

Subcommittees may pursue sponsorships, where appropriate, and/or in-kind donations, with coordination and approval of the full committee.

This living document will be updated by subcommittee as each plan develops, progresses and advances.