

# NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIVERSITY

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## A&T Engineering Dean Will Retire June 30th

**GREENSBORO, NC** – North Carolina A&T State University Interim Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Alton Thompson announced the retirement of Dr. Joseph Monroe, dean of the College of Engineering (COE). Thompson said Monroe's retirement is effective, June 30. N.C. A&T will conduct a national search for Monroe's successor.

"Dean Monroe has shown exemplary leadership in our prestigious College of Engineering, the nation's No. 1 producer of African American engineers," Thompson said. "As one of our 1962 engineering mathematics graduates, Monroe brought valuable high-tech contributions to his beloved alma mater following a celebrated military, higher education and international career."

Monroe was the first African American in the country to obtain a Ph.D. in computer science in 1972, from Texas A&M University. A founding member of the first Computer Science Honor Society (now an international society), he established an accredited computer science program at A&T; held a Ronald E. McNair Endowed Chair Professorship in Computer Science at A&T (1991-2009); chaired the department of computer science at A&T (1991-2000); and served as dean of the COE at A&T (2000-present).

A strong proponent of professionalism in the engineering curricula with concern for undergraduate students, Monroe led an intense focus for all students in the college to obtain their professional licensure as engineers. A&T students are now more likely to take the exam required for this licensure, and are now passing the exam at a rate that is equal to or above the national average.

Monroe led the development of new programs in computer engineering, geomatics, computational science and engineering, and biomedical engineering (fall 2009 deployment). Geomatics leads A&T in the establishment of on-line courses, which will result in increasing professionalism in the surveying profession. In addition, all programs recently reviewed by ABET, the professional accrediting agency for colleges/schools of engineering, were successfully accredited.

Under Monroe's leadership, A&T now has the most tenured or tenure track African American engineering professors in the nation. This is vital for A&T's status as a national leader in the production of African American engineers at the bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. levels. During Monroe's tenure, A&T graduated 21 Ph.D. engineers in 2004 and consequently achieved reclassification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a "high research activity" doctoral university. He has

vigorously supported research efforts and was instrumental in A&T's No. 3 rank in the UNC System for research funding (over \$11,400,000 awarded to COE in 2007-2008). A&T was awarded an Engineering Research Center (ERC) by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2008. A&T is the first HBCU to obtain this award.

A native of North Carolina, Monroe is a strong proponent of collaborations that fosters A&T's mission in the region and the state. In March, he will host a conference with two-year colleges across the state and the geomatics program at A&T to ensure a seamless transition for North Carolina students who wish to continue their geomatics training beyond the two-year level. He has vigorously supported many initiatives to ensure a seamless transition for two-year college students into all the engineering programs at A&T.

Monroe built on his U.S. Air Force Academy leadership to host a successful accreditation visit by the Computer Science Accrediting Board (CSAB), which resulted in the Academy being among the first group of programs to be accredited by the CSAB. Monroe thrived at the Air Force Academy (1967-1987) from instructor to full professor and from captain to full colonel while serving as assistant dean of faculty, electrical engineering head, and computer science head. He achieved the highest distinction that a professor can obtain as the first African American to be appointed a permanent professor at the Academy. The President of the United States, with advice and consent of the U.S. Senate, has the exclusive privilege to appoint permanent professors. Monroe joined a very elite group of only 22 permanent professors out of 600 faculty members to be chosen.

Monroe served as associate vice president of academic affairs for UNC-General Administration (1987 to 1988); vice chancellor for advancement at Fayetteville State University (1988-1989); and vice chancellor for academic affairs at Fayetteville State University (1989-1991). He has developed, delivered and implemented accredited computer science programs for the Egyptian Air Force Academy, the Royal Thai Air Force Academy, Fayetteville State and A&T.

He has served on the Board of Directors for the Industries of the Blind (1995-2005), Board of Directors for Computing at NASA (1995-200), and the Board that governs the practice of Engineering and Surveying in North Carolina from 1998 to 2008 (the full term limit allowed by state law).

Monroe's chief supporters are his wife, the former Sally McNair and sons—Joseph, Jr. and Robert Bruce.

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