

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & ACCESS

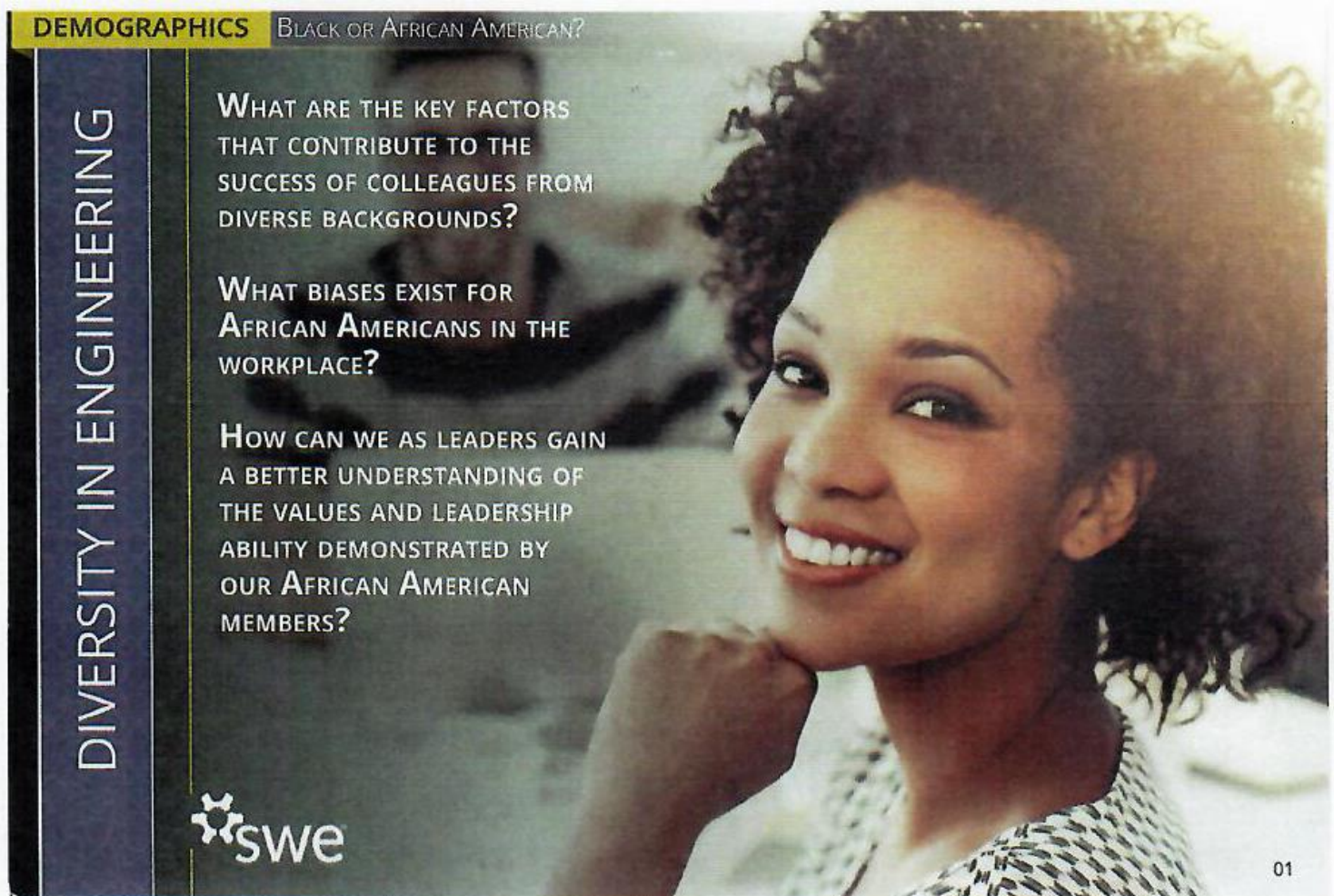
mines.edu/diversity

Inclusion Icebreakers: Underrepresented Groups

Black or African American

How to use this Inclusion Solution card in a group setting:

- Review the questions on the front of the card to help anchor the topic
- Extend a few minutes of personal reflection
- Ask individuals to relate the topic to the current work environment and/or campus climate and what a future state might look like
- Create a dialogue on how the topic might create innovative thoughts, new direction for programs/classroom instruction/services, or ways to address challenges in the work environment and the campus climate




DEMOGRAPHICS BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN?

DIVERSITY IN ENGINEERING

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF COLLEAGUES FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS?

WHAT BIASES EXIST FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE WORKPLACE?

HOW CAN WE AS LEADERS GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUES AND LEADERSHIP ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY OUR AFRICAN AMERICAN MEMBERS?

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The card features a background image of a smiling Black woman with curly hair, resting her chin on her hand. The text is overlaid on the left side of the card.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

DEMOGRAPHICS

Black or African American?

'African American' slightly preferred among those who have a preference.

In the United States, the labels used to describe Black Americans have undergone significant changes in the centuries since those of African origin first arrived on the continent. In recent times, two labels have been used most often to describe Blacks in America; "Black" and "African American," but it is not generally clear what the preferred term is from the perspective of Black Americans themselves.

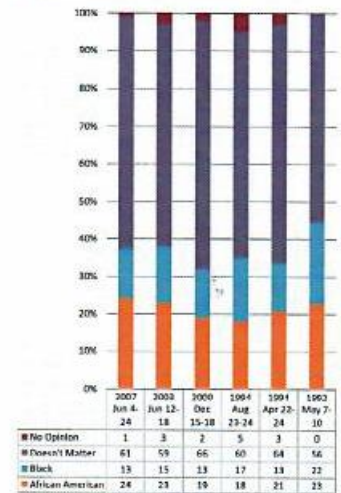
From 1991 until 2007, Gallup collected information from Black Americans about their preferred terminology using the following: "Some people say the term African-American should be used instead of the word black—which term do you prefer; African-American or Black, or does it not matter to you either way?"

The fundamental conclusion from the six years of data collected was that the majority of Black Americans today do not have a preference for the use of the term Black or African American when they are given the explicit opportunity to say so.

Within the field of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), there are many examples of outstanding female leadership within the African American community. Aprille Ericsson, Dot Harris, and Ainissa Ramirez are just a few examples of inspirational women engineers. Ericsson was the first African American female to receive a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from Howard University. She was also the first African American female at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center to hold a Ph.D. in Engineering. Ericsson is now pioneering some of the most ambitious space exploration endeavors at NASA. Harris is a force of innovation in the energy industry, while Ramirez's research on 'smart' metals is helping transform lifesaving medical devices.

SURVEY SAYS... It really doesn't matter

The results of available survey research indicate no strong consensus among the American black community for how their racial group should be described.



SOURCE: Newport, F., 2007. "Black or African American." Retrieved on, February 2, 2016. http://www.gallup.com/poll/28816/Black-African-American.aspx?utm_source=genericbulletin&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=sharing_Role Models in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. <http://www.usasciencefestival.org/all-blogs/tag/824-role-models.html>

Associated groups at Mines

- Student Organization: [National Society of Black Engineers \(NSBE\)](#)
- Employee Resource Group: [Black Mines Community Alliance](#)

Reference:

"Inclusion Solutions: Discussing a Diverse Culture is in the Cards," *Lessons Learned Consulting, Inc.*, 2016.