



News & Events

[AEP News Releases](#)[Search AEP Now News](#)[Local News](#)[Subscribe](#)[About AEP Now News](#)

Women's History Month Profile: Whitney Whitfield

Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 4:00 AM ET • Comments: 7 • [View Comments](#)



Written by:
Kelley L Lauginiger
BOPA Solution Delivery

[DIVERSITY](#)[EMPLOYEES](#)

Women's History Month celebrates the contributions and achievements of women. To kick off Women's History Month, here's a profile of Whitney Whitfield, engineer associate in Tulsa, who has been with AEP for just under a year.

Inclined Toward Engineering

A memory with which other engineers may identify, Whitfield remembers her mom telling her that "I was always the one who played with Legos and building blocks, not dolls." While she loved being creative and thinking outside the box, it was also Whitfield's mother who urged her to do something more structured with that creativity from a young age.

"I loved art so much. It just gave me peace, and gave me a chance to be creative," said Whitfield. "Most of my family are educators, including my mother, so she provided a lot of great advice from a young age. She told me that if I wanted to do art, why don't I use it to build things, or something related to engineering."

Naturally drawn to scientific ideas, and armed with support, creativity and direction, Whitfield was quickly enrolled in STEM programs. She loved every minute of them, and was placed in the STEM magnet program in high school where she worked primarily in robotics and programming.

As her education in these areas developed, her drive towards success in a STEM field was clear to her peers and teachers. Of these peers and teachers, however, very few looked like Whitfield.

Whitfield, a Black woman who attended predominantly white schools, was used to being in a male, white-dominated atmosphere. Once she decided a STEM future was for her, she looked into finding a school where other Black individuals, like herself, were working towards the same goals.

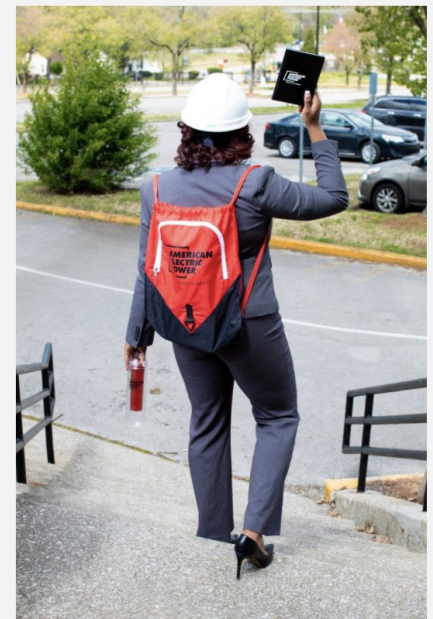
Connecting to STEM Through TSU

"My family is mostly educators, but they did mostly attend Historically Black Colleges and Universities," she said.

"Tennessee State University (TSU) and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University were my top choices, so I started with those schools and their offerings. I was able to get into a program with robotics and STEM topics through TSU, then decided to major in Architectural Engineering."

Advice From Whitney:

"Don't let anyone treat you like regular glue, you are glitter glue!"



While she was in the TSU summer program in 2017, her counselor told her about the National Society for Black Engineers (NSBE).

Whitfield explained how she "joined NSBE in 2017, became the chapter programs co-chair, programs chair, then the vice president, then president of the chapter and then Region 3 Programs Chairperson" by 2020.

"It just happened naturally," Whitfield said of her quick rise to NSBE leadership. "The program needed help as people would move on, or graduate, which is just what happens with college programs. Since I got involved early in my college career, I had a clear vision for what was needed, and was also able to fill those gaps in as they came up so that NSBE could keep offering resources to people."

She also had mentors along the way, including a professor at TSU, Catherine Armwood-Gordon.

"She was like a mother to me in college," Whitfield said. "I figured if she could do it, I could do it too."

Joining the AEP Family

During her time leading NSBE and taking STEM programming at TSU, Whitfield became a part of the AEP family through the Co-Op and Internship program.

Whitfield was hired into the AEP Tulsa office as a station engineer associate (ERCOT) in June 2022. Since then, she's made a name for herself around the office posting "Quotes of the Week" on her dry erase board, hoping to engage her peers while reminding everyone to look out for one another.

Giving Back

It's been made clear that one of Whitfield's strongest skills is bringing people together to inspire an attitude of lifelong learning. While she did help plan national events, meetings, and plan high-level administrative projects for NSBE in her time there, Whitfield says her favorite memories were with students.

"It felt full-circle to me. Being able to give back to the incoming TSU freshmen in the same program I started in was great," Whitfield said. "While I was their counselor, I used the time to teach them Autodesk so that they came into college with a leg-up. This was something extra I could offer. I remembered my counselor telling me about NSBE, which led me to AEP, and my current role helping as an engineer, and wanted to offer resources to the incoming students in the same way."

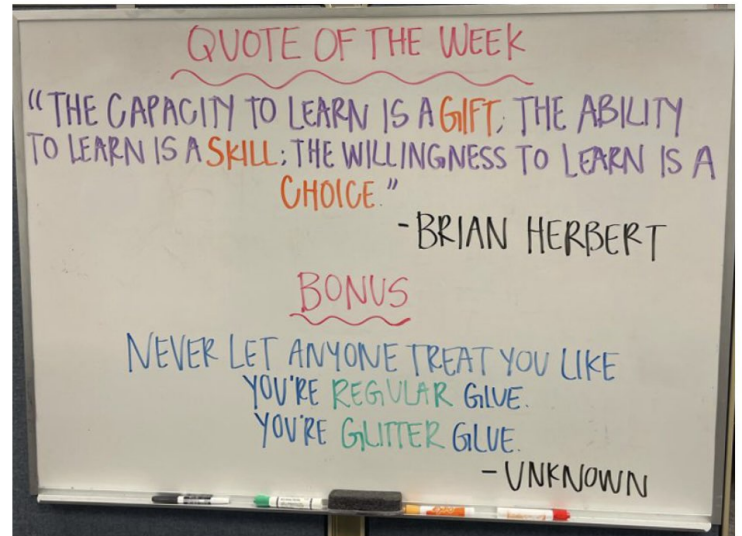
Whitfield noted that a lot of things she accomplished started by getting out of her comfort zone and following her passions no matter the challenges.

"Sometimes you just have to get uncomfortable," she said.

Whitfield was also a recent guest on Best Friend Friday with Sam Queeno:



Whitney Whitfield, Engineer Associate (Tulsa, ERCOT).



Whitfield's dry erase board one week in Tulsa.

