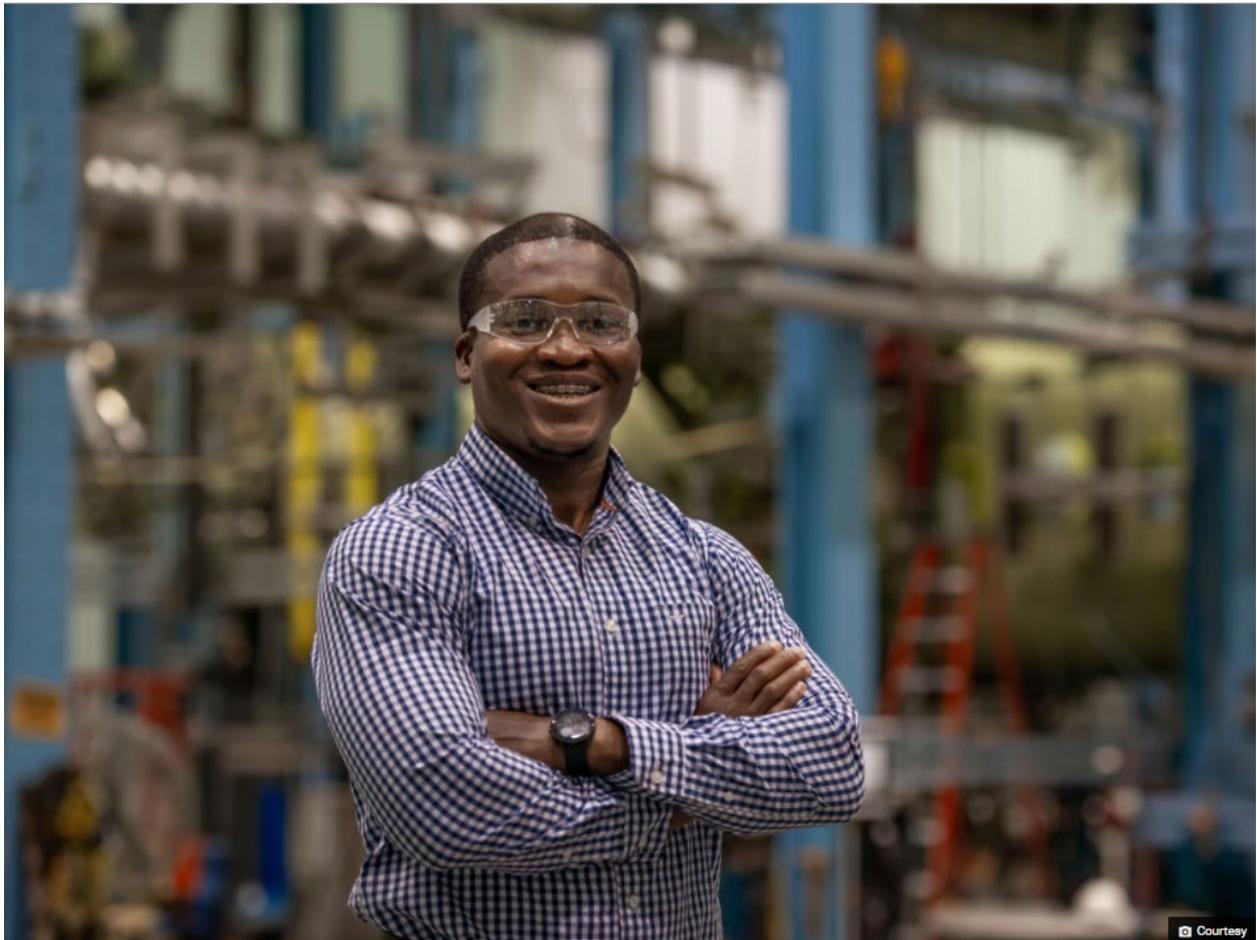


## WSU News

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# Wichita State aerospace alum wins Black Engineer of the Year Award

By Sara Ornelas, Marketing Content Strategist



Shocker aerospace engineering grad Prince Yengbe has recently been honored with the Modern-Day Technology Leader Award by the 2021 Black Engineer of the Year Award (BEYA) STEM Conference.

When Prince Yengbe came to Wichita State University from his home country of Ghana in 2007, he wasn't entirely sure what aerospace engineering was, but he knew he wanted to be part of it.

Now, after earning a bachelor's (2012) and a master's degree (2015) in the subject, Yengbe is being honored with the Modern-Day Technology Leader Award by the 2021 Black Engineer of the Year Award (BEYA) STEM Conference.

"When I started at Wichita State in 2007, I knew nothing about aircraft other than you sit in them," said Yengbe, who works as a fatigue and damage engineer for Textron Aviation. "I didn't know what aerospace engineering was, but I wanted to get involved to understand it. I sent a bunch of emails to some professors."

One of those professors, Dr. Kamran Rokhsaz, reached out to Yengbe and eventually offered him an undergraduate research assistantship.

"That was the pivotal point in my journey," Yengbe said. "It gave me the exposure to real aerospace engineering work while I was going to school. I cannot express how much that has had an impact on my career."

Applied learning and strong mentors have been crucial in Yengbe's career.

"I've been lucky that people have helped me in my whole career. It's been nice to have people teach me the ropes," he said. "I think the biggest thing for me was the exposure to real work. You go to class, sit down, you learn. But until you do the actual work, you don't really get the full understanding of what you learn."

Dr. Scott Miller, professor and the chair of the department of aerospace engineering, said during Yengbe's time at Wichita State, he was part of a team that designed, built, and flew a plane called the Atomic Shocker — "a beautiful and fantastic flying aircraft," Miller said.

"He was a fantastic student. He was hard working, high performing, and very personable," Miller said. "I'm not surprised to hear Prince is the Engineer of the Year."

The BEYA STEM Conference brings professionals and students together annually for three days to share their experiences and career information. The conference is an opportunity to recognize leaders in STEM for their accomplishments and for attendees from around the country to network and learn.

Yengbe was nominated by his manager at Textron for the Modern-Day Technology Leader Award he received from BEYA STEM.

"It means a lot. I take pride in what I do, and I try to ensure that everything I touch is given my best effort, so to have this award is a bonus," Yengbe said. "Even though this was not expected, it means a lot to me. It tells me that what I'm doing is not in vain, and people recognize the good work that I do so."