

## **Tau Beta Pi Announces 2022 Distinguished Alumnus Award Winners Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D. and Katherine L. Bouman, Ph.D.**

Knoxville, TN — Tau Beta Pi, the Engineering Honor Society, has named the recipients of the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Distinguished Alumnus Award. This award recognizes alumni who have demonstrated adherence to the ideals of Tau Beta Pi and foster a spirit of liberal culture on local, national, and international levels. **Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D.** and **Katherine L. Bouman, Ph.D.**, are the 2022 Tau Beta Pi Distinguished Alumnus honorees. Each will receive a commemorative plaque and a \$2,000 scholarship will be given in the name of each winner to a deserving student member of TBP.

### **Their Biographies Follow:**



**Makola Abdullah, Ph.D.**, *DC Alpha '90*, is an internationally-renowned educator recognized for outstanding research.

Dr. Abdullah earned his B.S. degree from Howard University in civil engineering and master's and

Ph.D. degrees in the same field from Northwestern University, where he became the youngest African American to receive an engineering Ph.D.

In 2016, he was appointed president of Virginia State University (VSU). Dr. Abdullah previously served as provost and senior vice president at Bethune-Cookman University (FL), provost and vice president for academic affairs at Florida Memorial University, and dean and director of 1890 land grant programs at Florida A&M University. Under his leadership, VSU has received significant recognition, including HBCU of the Year (2018), the No. 8 ranking HBCU in 2019-20 by *U.S. News & World Report*, and being named HBCU Male President of the Year (2017).

Dr. Abdullah was appointed by President Biden to the President's Board on HBCUs dedicated to advancing the HBCU Initiative to increase capacity and provide the highest-quality education. He is an active member on numerous boards and committees, including Big Brothers Big Sisters of America Board of Directors, Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association Board of Directors (past chair), Virginia Council of Presidents (chair), and APLU 1890 Council of Presidents (past chair).



**Katherine Bouman, Ph.D.**, *MI Gamma '11*, is being recognized for her pioneering techniques, commitment to inclusion, and impactful contributions.

Dr. Bouman obtained a B.S in electrical engineering from the

University of Michigan and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from MIT in electrical engineering and computer science. As a postdoctoral fellow in 2019 with the Event Horizon Telescope, she reconstructed the first image of a black hole, for which she was a co-recipient of the prestigious Breakthrough Prize.

She joined the California Institute of Technology in June 2019, where she is an assistant professor and Rosenberg Scholar. Currently, she is spearheading new interdisciplinary research initiatives in the computing and mathematical sciences department at Caltech.

To date, her accomplishments have been recognized with a faculty teaching award at Caltech, Scientist of the Year Award from the Society for Imaging Science and Technology, Event Horizon Telescope Early Career Award, and the Royal Photographic Society Progress Medal.

The nomination for this award states, "Dr. Bouman not only advises students on algorithms to improve computational imaging, but also on developing algorithms that address explainability and affect social change."