



MONICA CHALLENGER

Region 2

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 Florida, Africa, and the Caribbean Islands



Monica Challenger has built a reputation for her steadfast commitment to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) advocacy and education. Following a 15-year hiatus to focus on raising her family, Challenger relaunched her engineering career in 2019 in the aerospace industry. During her engineering career break, Challenger immersed herself in her local community by serving on various nonprofit boards dedicated to literacy, STEM education, and the arts. In July 2024, Challenger was elected as the first Black President of Cedar Rapids Public Library Board of Trustees in its 127-year history. Additionally, she serves a Senator for the Society of Women Engineers; a mentor for Harris - Stowe State University STEM Workforce Preparedness Institute; an advisory committee member for Iowa's Sixth Judicial District Department of Corrections, and a grant panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Challenger has been honored as the 2021 Modern-Day Technology Leader Black Engineer of the Year Award and recognized as a 2017 Woman of the Year by the Women's Equality Coalition of Linn County, Iowa. These accolades celebrate her over two decades of dedication to creating, presenting, and advocating for STEM educational programs. Challenger earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Massachusetts – Lowell and holds a Technical Leadership Certificate from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

Challenger and her husband raised their four children in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. They are proud to be a SpelHouse family with their two youngest children, twins, Jefferson Challenger, Jr. and Ava Challenger attending Morehouse College and Spelman College. In her free time, she enjoys crocheting, embroidering, reading, and solving the New York Times Connections word puzzle daily with her children over FaceTime – yet another reason why she loves technology.