

Dr Tessema is a native of Ethiopia. He received his undergraduate and graduate education at the University de Grenoble I, in France (1971-1979). In 1980, he came to the US as a postdoc at the University of Southern California. In 1982 - 2003, Dr Tessema held academic positions at Memphis State University and at Clemson University, where he grew through the academic ranks to the level of tenured professor. His research collaborations include visiting research positions at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, at UCLA, at NRL, and in Grenoble, France. He collaborated with scientists at the CNRS, and the European Synchrotron Research Laboratory

Dr. Tessema's research publications focus on materials research and condensed matter physics. He has trained 8 PhD students and six master students and several undergraduates. These include women, minorities and international students. He has taught undergraduate and graduate classes.

Dr. Tessema's service to the science community includes many years (1999- currently) of public service as a NSF program director in the Condensed Matter Physics, and most recently in the Instrumentation and National Facilities program. He is a founding member and the current President of the Ethiopian Physics Society in North America; he is a member of the American Physical Society, and the Forum of International Physics. In 2004, he served in the International Panel for Shaping the Future of Physics in South Africa (in 2004). Other international service includes (1) serving as a United Nation (UNDP) volunteer to teach physics in Ethiopia; (2) hosting international scientists in his laboratory, (Russia, Morocco); (3) teaching at the University Joseph Fourier, Grenoble France (1987-1988); (4) co-organizing of international workshops on instrumentation for nano-technology (2002); (5) participating in international workshops and conferences on broad range of issues such as access to major international user facilities, a recent conference on "STEM Research, Education and Collaboration in Africa" and other workshops on International partnership for graduate education in Africa. Dr Tessema has many years of experience in building partnership and has been active in various interagency and intra-agency working groups.