

# Gabe Shatkin

## *IDEA Center's Spotlight on UCSD's Future Engineers*

### **Quick Facts**

Grade: Senior

Major: Bioengineering: Biotechnology

Outside Interests: Writing/recording music, snowboarding, rock climbing, cooking, and playing board games with my girlfriend




### **Congratulations on finishing your Bachelor's Degree in Bioengineering: Biotechnology soon! What are your future plans after graduating from UCSD?**

This upcoming Fall I will be starting in the Biomedical Engineering PhD program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. I've been talking to quite a few professors in labs that work on topics from immunoengineering to regenerative medicine. One particular project I've recently become very interested in is from an epigenetics lab that is looking to gain insight into why some COVID-19 patients have severe symptoms while others do not and seeing if we can predict what treatments will work the best for different individuals. I am both excited and nervous about moving to the East Coast, but even in these uncertain times, I am optimistic about what the future has in store.

### **How has being an IDEA Scholar impacted your experience at UCSD?**

Being an IDEA Scholar definitely helped me meet people in my major before my first quarter even started. Three out of the four people in my senior design group are IDEA



Scholars and we've been in study groups together since we started taking upper division courses. Being an IDEA Scholar let me be a part of a support system that I knew I could always lean on if I needed help.

### **What has your research experience been like so far at UCSD? What advice would you give to students who are interested in pursuing research?**

My research experience started the summer after my second year when I participated in the IMSD research training program. This led to me getting a position in the Engler Lab, where I have been working ever since. I've learned a tremendous amount there and have even had the opportunity to be a co-author on a paper that we are finishing up right now. My biggest advice to students interested in pursuing research is: Don't be afraid. Most of the time that's the hardest part. Don't be afraid to reach out to professors or ask about research opportunities, and, more importantly, don't be afraid to try something new, even if you're not sure it'll be a great fit for you. You can always learn the skills you need or look for a position in another lab if it's not a good fit; in the worst case, you'll at least learn what type of research or mentorship style you're not interested in.

### **What experience or event has made the most impact on your time here as an aspiring engineer?**

My experience with mentoring opportunities has made a big impact on me. These have been through my positions on the officer board of the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society and through two summers working as a Peer Facilitator for the IDEA Center's Summer Engineering Institute, but my most impactful experience was this past summer. I got to spend six weeks mentoring and being shadowed by a high school while I was working in the Engler Lab. It was so great to see somebody super excited about some of the most trivial things in the lab, like getting to look at cells under the microscope. It reminded me how cool the projects I've had the opportunity to work on are and helped reinforce my aspirations to stay in academia and become a professor.



## When did you know you wanted to be an engineer?

I definitely knew I wanted to be an engineer around my sophomore year of high school. I always knew I wanted to do something in science or medicine, but I never quite knew what. When I was following my older sister around on college tours, I first heard about bioengineering and I thought that it sounded like the perfect mix of interests.

