

Dora Ogbonna

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

Quick Facts

Grade: Sophomore

Major: Chemical Engineering

Student Involvement: ACES Scholars Program



Questions about your achievements:

Congratulations on receiving the Goldwater Scholarship. You're the only student who received this award at UCSD this year! Tell us about this scholarship and what it means to receive this award.

The Goldwater Scholarship is a national scholarship awarded to college sophomores and juniors who are doing research in the STEM field. The scholarship given is in the form of money to be used towards tuition, and school-related expenses. For me, receiving this award has been a great honor. It also came as a way of encouraging me to keep up with the work that I am doing.

What has been your greatest achievement so far while attending UCSD?

One of my greatest achievement is being a resident assistant. As a Resident Assistant, I am put in a position where I can communicate with other students like myself and also have the ability to teach them what I have learned over my time here and beyond. It is quite an awesome opportunity to be a point of contact for students in various scenarios and also help them in the best way possible. I have also been able to grow and learn from the experience in many ways as well.



Questions about your experience:

What got you into research?

I was interested in research from a young age. Growing up in Nigeria, I always heard about how people discovered things and made things that help facilitate processes that today makes our lives easier, better, and faster. I knew that I wanted to carry out research that involved the human body. The interest has grown and refined over the years. In attending UCSD, I finally got a chance to explore research and take it up as something I wanted to do.

How has your experience in the McNair program helped you so far?

Being in the McNair program has been a wonderful experience. One of the main advantages I have so far is the organized access to different seminars which teaches students how to carry out research. One of the main things they focus on is teaching how to communicate your research. It is almost as equally important to learn how to communicate your work as it is to do the research. I am not well versed on that front so that is one of the greatest advantages I obtained through the McNair Program.

Could you share with us what it's like to be an ACES Scholar?

To be an ACES scholar, I had to attend the Summer Engineering Institute (SEI). SEI was a place where I was able to meet a lot of my current friends. This meant that I met people who had similar aspirations to mine or were going through the same things I was going through. As an ACES scholar, I had people I can depend on, talk to, and people who encourage each other to become the best version of themselves that they can be.