

Odemuno Prudence Ogelohwohor

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

Quick Facts

Grade: Sophomore (Class of 2022)

Major: Electrical Engineering

Outside Interests: Dancing, exercising, painting, trying out new restaurants, and exploring connections between art and technology

Questions:

When did you know you wanted to be an engineer?

I wanted to become an engineer in middle school, primarily because of my dad. He is a petroleum engineer and he always encouraged me to pursue a career in an engineering discipline because I am good at math, and science sometimes. As I became older, he helped me filter through all the different engineering fields to find something that suited me and intrigued me.

What is NSBE and what is your leadership role in this student organization?

NSBE stands for the National Society of Black Engineers. It is a worldwide non-profit organization that primarily encourages and actively supports the ambitions of Black pre-collegiate and collegiate students in various engineering




disciplines. For our UCSD NSBE chapter, I am the current treasurer. I have come to appreciate my role because I see it as a way to create opportunities for current and future NSBE members as the growth of our chapter depends on how we strategically manage our funds. Besides being the treasurer, I started a group this year called Women in NSBE (WiNSBE) and it is our mission is to empower Black female-identifying students in the STEM at UCSD and beyond through leadership, personal, and career development.



What activities does NSBE put on and how do you help facilitate those activities?

NSBE hosts social, professional and academic development activities. Some of our past and recurring social events are resume and elevator pitch workshops, lasertag and bowling socials, study jams, NSBE general body meetings, WiNSBE collaborative meetings, and the annual NSBE convention. As treasurer, I help





facilitate all these activities by defining and sustaining an annual budget (especially for the national convention), applying for funding sources on campus and monitoring how our funds are spent. For WiNSBE, I am a little more involved with the organization since it just started. I reach out to the other organizations we partner with and I present them with the discussion theme and we collaborate on the slides. Some of the themes from our winter quarter were Unconscious Bias and Female Representation in STEM with SWE (Society of Women Engineers), Black Women in STEM Leadership with BSU (Black Student Union), Intersectionality and Conference etiquette with oSTEM (out in STEM) and Tech in the Beauty Industry with the BRC (Black Resource Center).

How has being involved in student orgs and taking on leadership roles changed your experience as a student here at UC San Diego?

Being involved in student organizations has greatly changed my UCSD experience. Besides being involved with NSBE, I was the Public Relation Officer for Project in a Box (PiB) and I am the Media Lead for the African Students Association (ASA). Frankly, I do not know what life would have been at UCSD, if not for my student orgs. I have met some of the smartest, funniest, most helpful and inspirational people ever.

Being involved in leadership roles is like a part-time job where no one's paying you, so all your work truly comes from your desire to see growth and change. I constantly learn to develop myself by being in leadership groups. I am fortunate enough to work with some students who have hope, especially with regards to the statistical and physical representation of Black students in engineering at UCSD.



What advice do you have for peers and incoming students who are interested in joining student orgs?

Do not think that you are not “welcomed” in any organization because it does not “look like” it applies to you. NSBE, even though its mission is to support Black engineers, we are a diverse group. We actively strive to improve the quality of life for everyone and we collaborate various diversity organizations to ensure everyone feels welcomed. Being part of leadership teams in my organization, we constantly encourage everyone to join regardless of their nationality, family background, race, age, sex or gender. Attend general body meetings and socials and if you feel like that org is not exactly what you’re looking for, try something else! There are so many options. If you join a different org every quarter you’re at UCSD, you’d still be left with so many more...

