

Brady Ankenbrandt

UCLA Fast Track Student of the Month



Birthplace: Redwood City, CA

Hometown: San Jose, CA

High School: Los Gatos High School

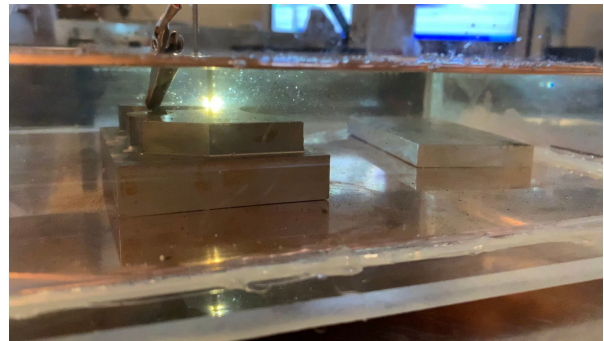
Interests: 3D modeling and CAD, light programming, 3D printing, politics and debate, basic circuits

Where are you from?

I was born in Redwood City, but I lived in Colorado for most of my life. I moved back to California in my sophomore year of high school, and had a good time at Los Gatos High School. Then, this past summer, my family moved a short distance out of Los Gatos to San Jose where I am now.

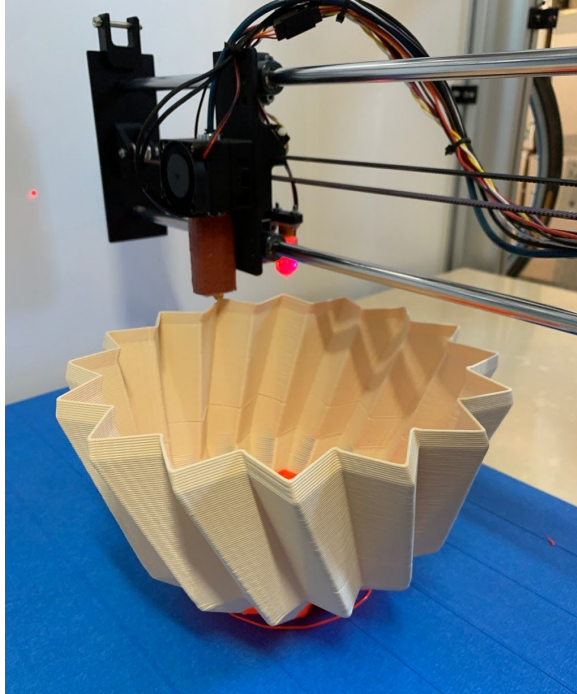
When did you know you wanted to be an Electrical Engineer?

Ever since I first learned basic circuitry through Arduino in middle school, I knew that I could have fun as an Electrical Engineering major. However, what really cemented my interest in all things EE was my EDM machine project. Throughout my junior and early senior years of high school, I worked with friends to build a machine that uses sparks to erode metal underwater. It can cut any conductive substance, regardless of hardness, albeit slowly. I was in charge of the machine's circuitry and thereby learned how fun it would be to work on electronics professionally.



What are some of your other personal projects?

My current project is the Mediprinter, a large 3D printer with a build volume of 450mm x 1000mm x 1500mm. I'm working with a friend to build it using a vending machine we got for free. We've successfully determined how to interface with the machine's motors, connected our own machine controller, overridden the computer's default software, and run our first few test prints!



We're planning to donate the machine to our local high school when we are finished calibrating it. Our next project, which I am currently designing, will be a CNC mill capable of cutting aluminum plates and brackets.

How are you involved at UCLA?

I'm part of UCLA's Rocket Project, Baja SAE, 3D4E, and IEEE Micromouse clubs. Although so far I've mostly just made it through these teams' new student orientations, I did design a fully-parametric model rocket CAD in Rocket Project. Simply by changing constants in a text file, a user can generate a model rocket of any size and shape. I'm hoping to get more involved in all four of

these projects this quarter.



What is your favorite part of the Fast Track program?

I am very excited about our summer research opportunities. It'll be so cool to get to work on groundbreaking and interesting research--almost like an extension of our personal and club projects. And, of course, it will give us the chance to get closer to professors or grad students who can impart useful advice.

What are your educational and career plans?

I'm aiming for a master's degree to increase my likelihood of finding a job. Career-wise, though, one of my favorite things about Electrical Engineering is how versatile a degree it can be. I might like to make integrated circuits for Apple or Nvidia, or systems for SpaceX or Boeing, or all manner of equipment for Raytheon and the Department of Defense. Who knows what exactly I'll go into, but I am confident it will be interesting and leverage the skills I learn at UCLA.