

Fast Track Student of The Month February 2016 Xiaokai (Ria) Qi



Interviewee: Xiaokai (Ria) Qi
Interviewers: Cian Costello and Karen Li

Birthplace: Guangzhou, China

Schooling: Guangdong
Experiment High School

Interests outside of school:
Going to the gym, reading,
drawing.

**When did you know you
wanted to be an EE?**

I felt uncertain about my future in high school. When applying to colleges last year, I applied for humanities majors such as gender studies and international relations. Of the few engineering schools that I applied to, I was offered

scholarships and admission into special programs. At this moment, I started learning more about EE, and I realized that it is extremely useful and relevant across almost every industry. Today's music scene would be impossible without engineering -- think of all the electronics needed to create a hit song.

Who has influenced you the most in your choice of your academic field?

My family has been the biggest influence on me. My grandparents, parents, and cousins have all been EE majors, and I've grown up watching them work in the industry,

Why did you choose UCLA's EE program?

I chose the UCLA EE program because it is one of the best in the nation. It is conveniently located in Los Angeles, which means that there are tons of opportunities close by.



How has it been being on a big campus so far?

UCLA is a large public university with vast opportunities and resources. At times, I have found it to be a little overwhelming -- you really have to reach out and get involved if you want to take advantage of the all that UCLA has to offer. This is where the Fast Track Program provides a tremendous advantage. You meet with other EE majors and your faculty advisor on a monthly basis, which gives you the chance to engage with like-minded people and get academic counseling. In other words, you are enjoying the wealth of opportunity and resources that only a public

university can offer, while engaging with the community and getting the special attention from faculty that is typically found in a private university or liberal arts college.



What are you interested in as a career?

I have not decided yet. I'm fairly certain that I won't be working in a traditional engineering field or a "pure" engineering industry. I'm actively looking for other fields that can be combined with EE and its many applications.