

# Taylor Chung

June 2020 - UCLA Fast Track Student of the Month



## **Highschool:**

Los Gatos High School

## **Favorite Dining Hall:**

B-Plate

## **Hobbies:**

Music (started playing guitar over the summer), answering IEEE trivia, and sitting around/hanging out with friends

## **What prompted you to pursue Electrical Engineering?**

So in high school, I found physics and math interesting, and I had to choose a major when I was applying to university, and it made sense to pick electrical engineering. Now that I have spent some time taking classes at UCLA, I have realized that I am more interested in coding, which is a reason that I might switch my major to computer engineering.



## **Why did you pick UCLA?**

I can answer this one! I visited not that many schools, but UCLA was the brightest campus, with very bright and colorful vibes. And the food is just on another level. And I also like the Fast Track program. My first impression was the bright campus. UCLA also allows you to be a person instead of an engineering student. For example, I was able to participate in a club for taekwondo. I have a lot of friends who participated in art and music clubs. I like how

UCLA has arts and media in addition to engineering.

## **How is life on a big campus?**

Not that different from high school in the sense that UCLA might have more people, but I don't meet every single one of them, and I still have a sense of community because of fast track. Plus I can still meet a variety of people due to the size of the campus. And clubs!

### **What do you like about the Fast Track program?**

I like that we are offered a research position at the end of our first year because usually its hard to find opportunities this early on. I also like the monthly meetings which brought a sense of community. Also the pizzas.

### **How was summer research?**

I actually really liked my summer research. I was doing research with Professor Jonathan Kao, who was a great mentor. I am so thankful that I got to work with him this summer, although I wish I had more time to finish my research project. The project I was working on was a neural signal simulator that can be used to test different decoding algorithms for brain machine interfaces. Unfortunately, our progress was rather limited as we got through about the “SI” part of “SIMulator”. My big moment was when I first generated my neural signals and made several histograms of the generated signals. It was very rewarding when I generated neural signals that responded to my cursor input. In brief, the simulator works by taking the user input on the screen and generates neural signals that correspond to the movement on the screen. This alone took a long time to implement, taking 7-8 weeks of the 10 weeks. One of our goals, that we didn’t reach, was driving an arm with neural signals. So for example, you would insert some electrodes into a person's brain and it could drive an arm. Our project was also supposed to have a machine learning part, but the program ended before we could fully implement it.

### **What clubs are you a part of?**

I am in IEEE and I am OPS lead this upcoming school year. This means that I am going to be leading OPS, which stands for Open Project Space, but this year we’re changing it to Online Project Space. It attracts about 100 applicants each year and we teach practical skills such as soldering, breadboarding, and interfacing with microcontrollers. Obviously we can’t do soldering, and debugging is going to be more difficult because of the online setting. It has also been pretty tough figuring out how to get everyone their parts, but that is mostly figured out. I am worried that the sense of community may be missing because it is online, so we’re going to encourage people to socialize.

### **What are your plans after graduating?**

I don’t make plans that far into my life. But to be interview-friendly, I want to be alive and healthy and have a full-time job that pays me ok.