

Fast Track Student of the Month

Julian Mendel

Born in: Sunnyvale, CA

Went to school at: Homestead High School,
Cupertino, CA

Interests outside of school: playing saxophone,
hiking, Harry Potter

Siblings: older brother Brandon, twin brother Bailey

When did you know you wanted to be an EE?

In high school, I always enjoyed the math and science courses that I took. For that reason, I knew that I wanted to go into some sort of engineering in college, but at the time I was not sure which branch to choose. I decided to go with electrical engineering because it was the broadest field and I would have the best chance at finding a niche that I truly enjoyed.



Who influenced you most in your choice of academic field?

The person who influenced me the most to go into engineering was probably my physics honors teacher my sophomore year of high school. She was an excellent teacher who inspired my interest in physics, and this is what caused me to start seriously considering becoming an engineer.



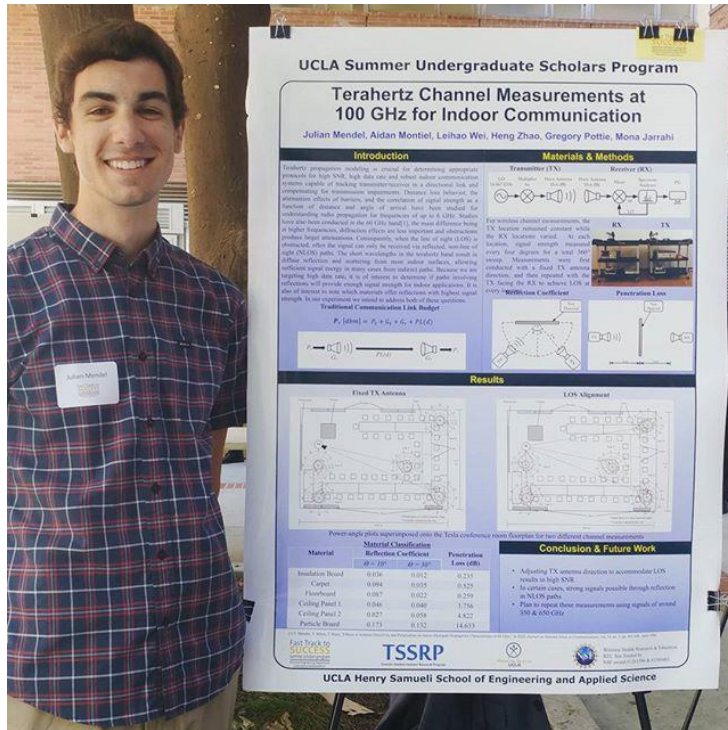
How has it been being on a big campus so far?

At first, I was somewhat weary about coming to a school with so many students. However, after having finished a year at UCLA, I can confidently say that the large campus environment is the one that I thrive in most. There are countless activities and clubs to get involved in that cater to very specific interests. For example, I joined Engineers Without Borders during fall quarter of my freshman year, and I am working on a project to design and build a library in a rural village in Northern Ethiopia. Because there are so many students and organizations at UCLA, I have easily been able to find other students that share the same passions that I do.

What are you interested in as a career?

Right now, my plan after getting my Bachelor's is to go to law school and pursue a career in intellectual property / patent law. As a kid, I always knew that I wanted to become a lawyer. However, when my interest in math and science developed in high school, I had to reassess my desire to go into law. The goal for now is to take the unique problem-solving approach that UCLA electrical engineering teaches its students and apply it to the field of patent law, which is closely tied to modern technology.





How was your summer research experience?

My summer research experience was very rewarding. I had the opportunity to work in Professor Mona Jarrahi's Terahertz Electronics Lab on a project that investigated the feasibility of using terahertz waves for indoor communication. It was somewhat overwhelming at first being thrust into an environment where I needed high-level knowledge of a field that I had never been exposed to. However, my graduate student mentors were excellent teachers, and by the end I was grateful to have a working knowledge on the development of communication systems.