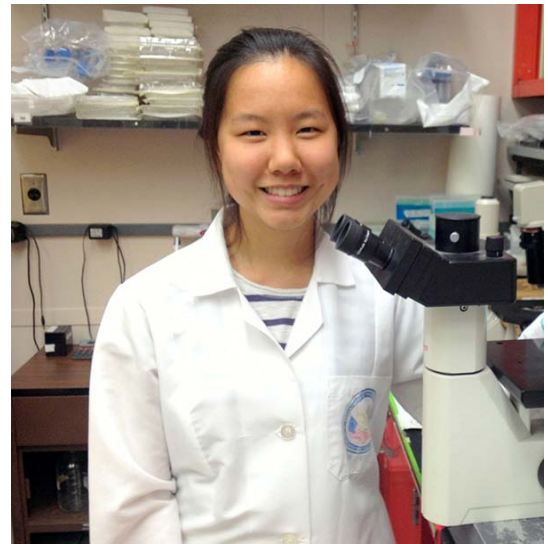


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UC San Diego Undergraduate Awarded National Barry Goldwater Scholarship

Angela Zou, an undergraduate at the University of California, San Diego, has received the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship, one of the most prestigious awards in the nation bestowed upon sophomore and junior undergraduates studying the sciences. The scholarship awards \$7,500 per year to support outstanding students from the United States who plan to pursue careers in science, engineering and math. An intensely competitive award, universities may nominate only four undergraduates per year for the Goldwater Scholarship. This year, a total of 260 students were selected by the board of trustees on the basis of academic merit from a field of 1,206 applications. Zou, a junior at Thurgood Marshall College, was the only recipient of the Barry Goldwater scholarship from UC San Diego.



Angela Zou conducting research in Professor Ongkeko's lab.

The Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program was established by Congress in 1986 to honor Senator Barry Goldwater, who served his country for 56 years as a soldier and statesman, including 30 years of service in the U.S. Senate. The program provides a continuing source of highly qualified scientists, mathematicians and engineers by awarding scholarships to college students who intend to pursue research careers and make significant contributions in these fields.

“I feel incredibly lucky to receive this scholarship,” said Zou. “It’s a big honor to receive the Goldwater award, but an even greater honor to be part of a school that makes all these opportunities possible.”

Zou entered UC San Diego as part of the Medical Scholars Program, which grants up to 12 California high school students admission to the UC San Diego School of Medicine. She is currently majoring in bioengineering and bioinformatics, and hopes to obtain her M.D./Ph.D. in Genetics and Bioinformatics. Zou conducted her research under the guidance of Weg Ongkeko, M.D., Ph.D., an associate professor in the Division of Head and Neck Surgery in the Department of Surgery at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

In Ongkeko's lab, Zou is investigating the role of non-protein-coding RNA in the progression of head and neck cancer.

"Angela has brought and will continue to bring honor and recognition to our university," said Ongkeko. "She is tremendously gifted and a model of what a student can accomplish here at UC San Diego."

"It is hugely motivating and fulfilling to realize that my research might one day translate into actual, tangible benefits for patients," Zou said. "And working with Dr. Ongkeko is phenomenal. His guidance and support were not only instrumental for the Goldwater scholarship, but also for inspiring my passion for research and medicine as a whole."

In the future, Zou plans to conduct research in cancer genomics and translational bioinformatics and teach at the university level. She hopes to better understand how disease develops, mutates and spreads to ultimately generate clinical therapies for patients.

Outside of lab, Zou is interested in fostering academic exchange between students from different fields and disciplines. To that end, this summer, Zou and other students are organizing a UC San Diego-wide undergraduate research journal and community. "Our society and its problems are becoming more and more interdisciplinary in nature, so I think it's important for us as students to be developing a broader perspective," she said.

Since the establishment of the Goldwater Scholarship in 1989, 47 UC San Diego students have been chosen for the scholarship award. For more information on the scholarship, visit goldwater.scholarsapply.org

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