

Electrical Engineering Senior Spotlight: Kene Akametalu Receives Hynes-Wood Award

☒ Kene Akametalu, a graduating senior in [Electrical Engineering](#), has been honored with the Hynes-Wood Award, given in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the activities and professional growth of students in the College of Engineering.

Akametalu breathed new life into UCSB's National Society of Black Engineers by restructuring the organization to include students from campus-wide STEM disciplines and infused NSBE events and members with his enthusiasm and dedication to making UCSB more attractive to African American students. He has organized outreach endeavors designed to increase the preparedness of future students and spreads the message that a university education is attainable to underserved, disadvantaged, and/or historically underrepresented students in our state.

He has worked diligently to connect current African American students with campus resources, created a new tutoring paradigm for NSBE to be inclusive of all the STEM disciplines and overseen the development of opportunities to bring together students, staff and faculty, regardless of cultural identity, to dialog on critical issues of interest to the whole campus.

Video interview with Kene Akametalu on "Why choose UCSB?"

As an undergraduate, Akametalu turned his vision into action, reaching out to incoming African American freshmen from all majors, but especially STEM majors. He helped provide a common place for student meetings, STEM major mentoring, study groups, and other support mechanisms provide by NSBE.

One nominator wrote "Kene has consistently demonstrated strength of character and a maturity not often seen in students his age. He balances a heavy course load as an Electrical Engineering major and co-chairing NSBE, while maintaining a 3.98 GPA"

In his role as Director of Education for the Black Pioneer Renaissance Organization, Akametalu created programming to inform, encourage and prepare students for Graduate School in the STEM disciplines. One such program is The Presentation Club, designed to prepare students to best represent themselves both orally and via software presentations ? skills highly valued by industry partners, graduate recruiters, and accreditors.

Akametalu was invited to join Tau Beta Pi, and to participate in IEEE, College of Engineering, and ECE departmental outreach efforts. He will begin Ph.D. studies at UC Berkeley starting this fall.

Congratulations to Kene Akametalu from all of us at the UCSB College of Engineering.

In 1986, the College of Engineering established the Hynes-Wood Award in honor of Dr. Jacqueline Hynes, former Assistant Dean for Academic Programs, and Professor Emeritus Roger Wood, Professor Emeritus of Electrical and Computer Engineering and former Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. This award is given in recognition of outstanding contributions to student activities in the College of Engineering, and for those who demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to the professional growth and development of students in the College of Engineering.

Images



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