Strength In Numbers

2017 Impact Report

The Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative
The Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative continues to provide exceptional experiences for our students. We help them leave campus better prepared, more driven, and with less of a financial burden than those who came before them.

Since the Initiative launched in 2013, the number of women in the freshman class has nearly doubled. The number of underrepresented minority students also nearly doubled. The number of first-generation college students offered scholarships is six times greater. Moreover, ACT scores and graduation rates continued the trend of increasing annually.

This growth is possible because of the generosity of you and other donors. Your commitment to improving and providing engineering education for future generations of students is changing the world. You make a world-class education possible to the best and brightest students.

We are very excited to announce The Grainger Foundation’s steadfast commitment to this goal and its impact. Thanks to their generosity, we now have the potential to match, dollar-for-dollar, any new contribution to the Initiative. Through the end of 2019, The Grainger Foundation will match all donations to the Initiative, up to $25 million. If you have considered continuing to support the Engineering Visionary Scholarship with another contribution, now is the perfect time to do so.

Your gifts, combined with The Grainger Matching Challenge, will enable us to meet and exceed our $100 million fundraising goal. Now, allow us to introduce some students who have benefited directly from your philanthropy.
“My entire story as an engineering student would not have been possible without the support of donors. A gift goes a long way; it does not just go to a scholarship – it goes to an infinite set of experiences that otherwise would not have been possible.”

Omar believes the supportive and collaborative environment is what makes Illinois unique. Because of the scholarship Omar received through the Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative, he was able to remain academically successful while still being involved in extracurricular activities. Omar has been involved with the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers during all four years at Illinois. Through this organization, he has met countless mentors and peers who have helped him pave the way for the rest of his career. One of his favorite memories from his undergrad experience is traveling to Beijing and Shanghai over the summer with the Hoeft Technology and Management Program.

Omar is proud to carry the University’s name with him as he strives to make a difference in the world. “I hope that further down the line, I can support future students achieve their goals and dreams, just like someone supported me.”

In May, Omar graduated and accepted an internship in the hardware engineering division at Microsoft. He plans to return to campus in the fall to pursue a graduate degree in electrical engineering.
Ann is a backend developer of StudyBuddy, the website/mobile app that matches students with study partners based on their location and courses.

As a freshman in the Department of Computer Science, Ann Rajan has quickly become a leader. In her Honors Intro to Programming course, Ann leads a project called StudyBuddy, which she plans to complete and hopefully launch in the near future.

Additionally, Ann is a member of the Society of Women Engineers where she serves as the Team Tech External Relations Chair, as well as the co-founder of the Girls Who Code Illinois chapter. Outside of her engineering-based activities, she is passionate about music and is a member of the University Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ann plans to make the most of her time on campus. Within the next four years, she would like to pursue a minor in Applied Statistics and the Hoeft Technology and Management minor. She is still deciding what she wants to do after graduation, but she is thinking she will either begin working in industry or continue with school to pursue an MBA.

She is extremely grateful to have received this scholarship because it helps cover the costs of tuition, fees, and other educational expenses. The generosity of Engineering Visionary Scholarship donors is helping to make her dreams a reality.
"Paying for college tuition is a daunting task, and your generosity is helping me reach my goal of graduating from the University of Illinois."

It is rare for a college student to spend their college breaks saving lives, but that is what Ryan does as a volunteer firefighter and EMT for the Spring Bay Fire Department.

When Ryan is back on campus, he is busy with his aerospace engineering studies. He enjoys low- and mid-power rocketry and is a member of the Illinois Space Society. As project manager for a theoretical, research-based competition managed by NASA, he helps ensure his team meets their deadline. Additionally, Ryan is involved with Student Launch and helped develop the payload landing system for this year’s competition. Ryan also finds time to participate in undergraduate research on CubeSat, which is a program that provides engineering students with hands-on design, building, and testing experience on a real satellite system.

Ryan transferred to Illinois after attending two years at Illinois Central College. Without a scholarship, he would not be able to participate in extracurricular activities and research that are enriching his experience at Illinois.
818 Students received funds from Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative in 2016.

$5,300 was the average scholarship award per student.

$53.8 Million raised towards the Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative as of May 2017.

1,493 Donors have supported the initiative to date.

Tripled the amount of scholarship money awarded since 2012.

56 Percent increase in the number of women in the freshman class since the Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative launch.

11 Percent of incoming freshman were offered a scholarship in 2016.
“Receiving a scholarship helped give me the confidence that I am smart enough to attend one of the best engineering universities in the world.”

Anthony Lambert received several competing offers to other engineering programs across the country. Ultimately, the combination of in-state tuition coupled with a generous scholarship package encouraged him to choose Illinois.

Growing up in a small town near St. Louis, Anthony was unsure he would succeed at Illinois. Although the campus is twice the size of his hometown, he loves every minute of being here. When he is not busy doing homework, he is actively involved with his church and is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers. As a freshman in undeclared engineering, Anthony has enjoyed his courses, especially the computing course he took this fall.

“When I was a little kid, I dreamed of living in a house full of robots that I designed and built. While I am older now, I still want to accomplish this goal to an extent. I want to build robots that help people, especially people in poverty.” Thanks to scholarship support, Anthony is able to expand his dreams and goals.
“As a first-generation child in the United States and a first-generation college student, I want everyone to have the opportunity to learn and make their families proud.”

Karolina Urban is thrilled to be a student in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Illinois. Karolina’s father is a construction worker, so she grew up watching buildings being created from the ground up. Karolina says she chose Illinois because with an Illinois engineering degree she “can create something greater. I can build skyscrapers in Chicago. That amazes me.”

Karolina serves as the Outreach Committee Chair for the Society of Women Engineers. In her spare time, she enjoys photography, swimming, and water polo. She spends time outdoors and says that photography keeps her “relaxed and is an expression of my appreciation for the world.”

Karolina is proud to be a student in the College of Engineering and realizes that her dream of an Illinois engineering education is made possible by her scholarship support. She someday hopes to help other students achieve their educational goals.
Edgar Mejia
Mechanical Engineering
2018

Edgar is proud to be a student in the College of Engineering and knows that his dream of an Illinois engineering education is made possible by the scholarship support he has received.

Edgar spent the fall semester studying abroad in Stockholm, Sweden. He learned about engineering’s role in environmental sustainability, by studying the waste created during manufacturing production. As an undergraduate research assistant in the Autonomous Materials Laboratory, he has studied how polymers behave in various environmental conditions.

He is excited by the opportunities a degree from the College of Engineering provides, saying, “I have always been attracted to the development of technology. However, I did not know what type of engineering I was going to do. I picked mechanical engineering because I believe this kind of engineering gives you the opportunity to learn from different areas.” Edgar has already visited 14 countries and has no plans of stopping soon.

Edgar enjoys mentoring other students and potential students. In his role as a Scholar Ambassador, Edgar helps plan and attends workshops that motivate students to complete their degrees. He is a member of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers and works to encourage students from low-income backgrounds to consider engineering as a profession.
Your Gift Shapes Our Future

The Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative brings the best students to Illinois by making college more affordable. Gifts to the Initiative have a direct impact on society because they enable future engineers to fuse their talent and passion with the education and skills they need to solve the world’s greatest challenges. These engineers will drive the economy, re-imagine engineering education, and bring revolutionary ideas to the world.

The changing landscape of higher education challenges us to find new, creative ways to support our students. The Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative is the driving force of our support.

When you give to the Engineering Visionary Scholarship Initiative, you enable us to pivot for the immediate needs of our students, recruit the best of them, and prepare them to succeed and inspire them to be agents of service and prosperity.

Your gift helps change lives, and the world, for the better.

Thank you for your support.