

USU Students Outshine Peers in National Scholarship Challenge | College of Engineering

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News Release – LOGAN, UTAH, Nov. 15, 2016 – Students and faculty at Utah State University's College of Engineering are celebrating an unusual success. This fall, eight engineering students received prestigious scholarship awards from the **American Nuclear Society** – a significant accomplishment considering USU does not have a nuclear engineering program.

But the university is no stranger to the topic. Two engineering researchers here recently received major research funding from the U.S. Department of Energy totaling \$5.8 million, and several other engineering faculty at USU are considered top experts in nuclear engineering fields.



Eight engineering students from Utah State University received scholarships from the American Nuclear Society. From left, Cody A Barrie, Joshua Rasmussen, James Broderick, Robert L. Olsen, Zachary F. Thomas, Erik Olson and Colby K. Searle pose for a photo. Not pictured: Zachary W. Pickering.

The eight scholarships awarded to USU students were the most awarded to any institution nationwide. Of the 36 ANS scholarship recipients in the undergraduate category who represent 14 institutions, all attend universities that offer nuclear engineering programs or official nuclear engineering courses except those students at USU. This unique success, says one USU engineering faculty, highlights an emerging trend: engineering graduates from USU are among the most capable and professional engineers in the country who will play an important role in leading tomorrow's nuclear energy, technology and defense needs.

"Nuclear engineering is more than just splitting atoms," said Heng Ban, a professor in USU's Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. "It's a broad topic that requires top leaders in electrical engineering, civil engineering, environmental engineering, mechanical engineering and more. Our graduates are some of the most qualified people to fill these roles."

The USU recipients are all members of the USU student chapter of ANS. Chapter president and mechanical engineering major Colby Searle said he and his classmates are often surprised to learn where nuclear technologies show up.

"I think students are just excited to learn how nuclear technologies have changed our modern world," said Searle. "Advances in nuclear technology have improved everything from medicine to space exploration and energy development."

Former chapter president Robert Olsen, an environmental engineering major, says he's interested in nuclear engineering because it makes good environmental sense. His involvement has led to scholarships and opportunities with the U.S. Navy.

"I think environmental engineers can contribute to the energy discussion," he said. "That's where my interest started, and after getting involved with ANS, my life and career trajectory have completely changed."

2016 Utah State University ANS Undergraduate Scholarship Recipients:

- Cody Andrew Barrie
- James Broderick
- Robert L. Olsen
- Erik Olson
- Zachary W. Pickering
- Joshua David Rasmussen
- Colby K. Searle
- Zachary F. Thomas

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