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CARLA AEOP High School Apprenticeship

I am currently a PhD student in Mechanical Engineering at UC Berkeley. I also work part time as a Business Operations Manager in Intel in the Developer Software Engineering Division. Before starting at UC Berkeley, I worked for 4 years as a product engineer at a solid state battery startup.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE HOPES AND DREAMS?

In the coming years I hope to complete my PhD, return to working in private industry, and eventually lead R&D teams to create technologies with positive impact in the materials and/or energy spaces.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE BEST THINGS ABOUT THE PROGRAM YOU PARTICIPATED IN?

I especially loved my fellow students and my mentors (Paul Ruffin, Eugene Edwards, and Gayla McMichael). I also highly appreciated the opportunity to present a project. I have been using the presentation and report writing skills I gained in the program ever since. Getting to see professional labs and working environments was so cool to me at the time and looking back I realize that it made entering the engineering field less intimidating.

HOW DID PARTICIPATING IN AEOP INSPIRE YOU TO ADVANCE IN THE STEM FIELD?

Participating in AEOP's High School Apprenticeship Program introduced me to the professional engineering world—its vocabulary, labs, methodologies, culture, breadth, and impact—and helped me integrate myself into that world. Through that integration, I realized the engineering world was something I wanted to be a part of. It showed me that I still had so much to learn and so much to look forward to in an engineering career.

DO YOU HAVE ANY WORDS OF ADVICE FOR SOMEONE CONTEMPLATING ENROLLING IN AN AEOP PROGRAM

Don't get discouraged when you've been trying to understand something, but still feel lost. It's okay! You are still learning, and you have a long way to go. Pay attention to what topics and job roles pique your interest. You might discover something you'll love but never heard of before.