UCLA Samueli
School of Engineering

#EngineerChange

November 2026



UCLA Samueli Announces 15 Inaugural Semiconductor Hub Fellows

The Semiconductor Hub at UCLA Samueli has named 10 first-year doctoral students to its inaugural fellowship cohort, supporting research ranging from semiconductor materials and chip architecture to photonics and artificial intelligence.



Richard Buttery to Join UCLA as Kenneth C. Griffin Endowed Chair Holder in Fusion Science

Richard Buttery, an internationally recognized fusion scientist and former director of the DIII-D National Fusion Facility, joined UCLA on Nov. 1 as the inaugural holder of the Kenneth C. Griffin Endowed Chair. The appointment, effective Nov. 1, 2026, is shared between the Division of Physical Sciences and UCLA Samueli.



A Quick Squeeze Helps CRISPR Tools Edit Brain Cells' Neurons More Efficiently

A UCLA research team led by Dino Di Carlo, a Distinguished Professor of bioengineering, has developed a way to temporarily loosen tightly packed brain cells, making it easier for targeting tool CRISPR activation, or CRISPRa, can reprogram genes inside cells that would be otherwise inaccessible.



New AI Platform Helps Uncover Promising Cancer Drug Combinations

A team led by Neil Lin, an associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering and bioengineering, has developed a new artificial intelligence-based platform that could help scientists identify promising drug combinations to overcome treatment resistance in cancer.



Emil Buehler Perpetual Trust Gifts $1.2 Million for Wind Tunnel Research Facility at UCLA

The gift will establish a wind tunnel research facility led by Anya Jones, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering who specializes in experimental aerodynamics, lock-in thermography and fluid dynamics research space to improve aircraft design and flight safety.



UCLA Chemical Engineers Launch Pilot Project to Turn Campus Waste into Hydrogen Fuel

Led by Dante Simonetti, an associate professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, researchers at UCLA Samueli are collaborating with climate technology company Graphite to transform biomass waste on campus into hydrogen fuel while removing and sequestering carbon dioxide.



NSF Awards Nearly $1 Million to Fund Three UCLA Engineering Research Projects

Yuanxun Ethan Wang, a professor of materials science and engineering, in collaboration with Eric Poliakov, Alexander Balandin, the Fang Lu Professor in Engineering and a professor of electrical and



materials science and engineering; Liz Ghibaudo, an assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering; and Twee Wei, an assistant professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, received National Science Foundation grants totaling $930,000 to advance their respective research in quantum materials, satellite internet reliability and semiconductor packaging.



UCLA Bioengineer Jason Zhang Receives More Than $1 Million for Brain Cancer and Heart Disease Research

Jason Zhang, an assistant professor of bioengineering, has received two grants totaling $1.03 million to study how microRNAs into the cellular mechanisms underlying brain cancer and heart disease. The awards include $604,000 from the Cancer Research and $225,000 from the Edward Mallinckrodt, Jr. Foundation.



UCLA Distinguished Scientist Asad Madni Elected Fellow of Royal Society of London

Asad Madni '74, M.S. '75, a Distinguished Scientist and professor of electrical and computer engineering, has been elected a fellow of the Royal Society of London, one of the world's highest honors for distinguished scholars, artists and scientists.



UCLA Engineering Professor Yu Huang Receives International Breakthrough Award for Hydrogen Fuel Cell Innovation

Yu Huang, a professor of materials science and engineering and holder of the Traugott and Dorothea Friedenberg Chair in Engineering, was honored by the Falling Walls Foundation as the recipient of its 2026 Science Breakthrough of the Year in Engineering and Technology in the Breaking the Wall of Cost-Effective Hydrogen Fuel Cells category.



American Physical Society Names Yongjie Hu a Fellow

Yongjie Hu, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, has been awarded a 2026 fellow for his contributions to the physics of extreme thermal transport in nanoscale materials that enable advanced microelectronics and thermal management technologies.



UCLA Computer Scientist Saadia Gabriel Receives Amazon Research Award to Advance AI for African Languages

Saadia Gabriel, an assistant professor of computer science, has been selected by Amazon to develop artificial intelligence and natural language processing models that better support African languages.



UCLA Engineering Professor Shahriyar Hossain Receives Defense Award to Explore Quantum Vacuum Phenomena

Shahriyar Hossain, an assistant professor of materials science and engineering, has received a two-year, $360,000 Early Career Faculty Award from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency to investigate quantum phenomena in a vacuum, where quantum fields can exhibit fluctuations even in the absence of particles.





UCLA Chemical Engineering Professor Ashlie Martini Named to Ars Technica 2026 "31 Under 31" List

Ashlie Martini, a professor and vice chair of chemical and biomolecular engineering, has been named to the 2026 list of Ars Technica's "31 Under 31" Award in the Chemical & Materials category.



UCLA Internet Pioneer Leonard Kleinrock Receives Award for Founding the Age of Networking

Distinguished Professor Emeritus Leonard Kleinrock looks back on a lifetime of innovation and shares lessons learned in the years and decades after the first message ever sent from Boelter Hall at UCLA on Oct. 29, 1969.



UCLA Samueli Researchers Recognized in Honeywell UC Regents Innovation Awards

Among the recipients of the Honeywell UC Regents Presidential Regents Innovator Awards are Ayfer Özgür Özcan, a professor of electrical and computer engineering and bioengineering; Jean-Pierre Hubschman, a former ophthalmologist who co-founded Equalio with Jacob Rosen, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering and bioengineering and Tsu-Chin Tsao, a distinguished professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering; and Yuta La Plante, who co-founded Equalio with oral and environmental engineering professors Gaurav Sant and David Jassby.



UCLA Researchers Leverage AI-For-Science to Accelerate Control of Complex Quantum System

Pinshi Narang, a professor of electrical and computer engineering and computer engineering, leads a UCLA team collaborating with Caltech researchers to develop artificial intelligence-based approaches that enable precise control of complex quantum systems.



Google Names UCLA Engineering Student Ying Li Its 2026 PhD Fellow

Ying Li, a fourth-year Ph.D. student in electrical and computer engineering, develops methods that make autonomous AI agents more secure and reliable. She is advised by Prof. Yuan Tian, an associate professor of electrical and computer engineering, computer science and the Institute for Technology, Law & Policy.



UCLA SAMUELI IN THE NEWS

The New York Times

The Day Hall Received Us

The New York Times names Oct. 29, 1969, as one of the 10 most important days that changed the world in a feature marking its 175th anniversary. On that day, a message was sent from a node at UCLA's ARPANET from the lab of UCLA computer science professor Leonard Kleinrock in 3420 Boelter Hall to Stanford Research Institute. The message was supposed to be "LOGIN" but the network crashed after just two letters, "LO," reached their destination. That historic "LO and Behold" moment would change the world forever, paving the way for the internet and transforming human history.



How to Tell if There is an Internet Service Outage

Computer science adjunct professor Peter Reiher shares his insights on how to tell if there is an internet service outage, whether it is limited to their local network or a part of a broader disruption. The interview is also carried by NBC affiliates across the country, including NBC 4 New York, NBC 4 San Diego, NBC 10 Boston, NBC 5 Dallas-Fort Worth, NBC 6 South Florida and Telemundo 44 Washington D.C.

KCBS RADIO

"Conspiracy or Coincidence?" More on Recent Cyber Failures

John Villasenor, an electrical and computer engineering professor and nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, joins KCBS to discuss recent major technology outages and answers listener questions during a live interview. He notes that there are no reports pointing to a cyberattack as the cause of the recent failures. However, he points out that new AI capabilities offer bad actors new tools to attack systems and that many legacy systems are vulnerable due to insufficient funding for upgrades.

TIME

The Best Inventions of 2026

TIME names Coco Robotics' last-mile, emissions-free delivery robot from Coco Robotics, has been named one of Time's Best Inventions of 2026. The company was co-founded by UCLA Samueli computer science alums Zach Rash '19 and Brad Squicciarini '19.



UCLA's PhoneBot Turns Old Android Phones Into Walking Robots

The story features a smartphone-powered humanoid robot developed by Ph.D. student Jonathan Hyun and professor Dennis Hong, a UCLA, which is led by Dennis Hong, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering. The robot is also highlighted in Tech Radar.

The Washington Post

Three Surprising Everyday Objects Can Expose You to Microplastics and More

The article about the presence of microplastics in commonly used products and food. It references a study on plastic particles in chewing gum led by Sanjay Mohanty, an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering. The same study is also featured in Scripps, as New Jersey considers a bill that proposes labeling products that contain the particles.

INDEPENDENT

Scientists Stunned as New AI Unlocks Game-changing Cancer Treatment

Neil Lin, an associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering and bioengineering, discusses an artificial intelligence platform developed by his lab that can predict promising drug combinations to combat treatment resistance in cancer.

CALIFORNIA PORT

Applied Materials Unveils $8B Research Facility in Silicon Valley in Bid to Streamline AI Chipmaking

The piece mentions UCLA Samueli among the EPIC Center's academic partners, which also include Stanford and Berkeley, and the company's teams. The center's founding partners include TSMC, Intel, Samsung, Micron and SK Hynix, with additional contributions from Broadcom and four other universities.

TheScientist

Squeezing Cells Loosens DNA, Boosts CRISPR Efficiency

UCLA bioengineers have discovered that briefly squeezing physically loosens compact DNA so the gene reprogramming tool CRISPR activation can reach and activate otherwise inaccessible genes to transform one cell type into another.

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

Inside the Bold, Quixotic Quest to Store Planet-Warming Carbon in the Ocean

In an article about capturing and storing carbon dioxide in the ocean to help slow the climate crisis, mentions Gaurav Sant, the Jane and Professor of Sustainability and the director of UCLA's Institute for Carbon Management, comments on the importance of controlled, measurable marine carbon dioxide removal methods.

TECH BRIEFS

New Robot Hops Over Obstacles Using Bioinspired Elastic Rods

The article features a bioinspired robot developed by Dennis Hong, engineering, and Daizhong Xing, a former doctoral student in his lab, discuss the challenges they faced in developing a robot capable of hopping across rough terrain using snapping elastic rods.

tnl

Rivers Downstream of Wisconsin CAFOs Are Full of Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria, Study Finds

Jennifer Jay, a professor of civil and environmental engineering, and Katie Clebsch, a Ph.D. student in Jay's lab, discuss the abundance of antibiotic and drug-resistant bacteria in Wisconsin waterways in the article about a study they co-authored on water contamination from large livestock farms.

The New York Times

'I'm on a Way Footing': Terry Tao and the Crisis in Math

Andrea Bertozzi, a professor of mathematics and mechanical and aerospace engineering, comments on the speed and costs of AI agents solving a famous math problem.

The Data Drop

How Engineers Log Us the Internet

Paul Eggert, a teaching professor of computer science, is highlighted as the official coordinator of the widely used time zone file since 2012.

UCLA Magazine

The Night I Went Blind

Ph.D. student Ben Wang discusses the importance of digital accessibility for individuals with disabilities, mentions a prototype for a car that could be driven by the blind made by Dennis Hong, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, and a haptic prosthetic developed by Wenlai Liu, a distinguished professor of bioengineering and electrical and computer engineering.

STUDENTS



First-Gen UCLA Chemical Engineering Student Develops Hydrogels to Help Treat Eczema

Ph.D. student Gelareh Golnaz Moghadam is developing biocompatible materials designed to retain moisture in the lab of assistant professor Thaleeya Wright of chemical and biomolecular engineering. Moghadam is also a first-generation student who mentors students to help them navigate setbacks similar to those she faced adjusting to college.

ALUMNI



UCLA Bioengineering Alum and Physician Combines Engineering and Medicine to Develop Wearable Sensors for Personalized Skin Disease Monitoring and Treatment

Ali Mirshafiei, who graduated with a bioengineering technology at UC Irvine, shares how his path to the intersection of engineering and medicine began during her senior year of high school, with a conversation at Discover UCLA Engineering for admitted students.

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