

Ese Asoro awarded the 2023–24 Murray Slater Foundation fellowship

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Ese Asoro, MEng '24 (ME) is the latest recipient of funding from the Murray Slater Foundation, an award he says means “the world” to him. Expressing his gratitude, Ese added while the award came as a surprise, it has enabled him to embark on this journey towards his master’s degree with excitement.



Founded in 2017 on behalf of the late Berkeley civil engineering alumnus Murray Slater, '44, MS '48, the Murray Slater Foundation is committed to continuing Mr. Slater’s legacy with the ultimate goal of providing modest financial support for individuals, education, or programming that, in his words, could, “potentially provide benefits to mankind.”

In keeping with the Murray Slater Foundation’s mission and the intent of the late Mr. Slater, the foundation made a gift to Berkeley Engineering this year to fund the tuition and fees for one or two talented Master of Engineering (MEng) students, who would not be able to come to Berkeley without support. This year, Berkeley MEng student Ese Asoro was awarded the gift as he pursues a master’s in engineering with a concentration in mechanical engineering from UC Berkeley.

Funding recipients, and Ese specifically, are chosen for this award because they best represent the mission of the foundation as exceptionally talented aspiring engineers facing financial barriers who want to contribute to a better world. The gift from The Murray Slater Foundation covers Ese’s total tuition for 2023–24 in the MEng program.

Berkeley Engineering is deeply grateful for the foundation’s partnership since 2018 to support graduate students, like Mr. Asoro, and the Girls in Engineering middle-school outreach program.

About Ese Asoro

Ese earned his undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from Nigeria. Despite there not being much of an engineering industry there, he took initiative and was luckily able to embark on a racecar project.

He shared the possibility of building one with some of his classmates and soon embarked on a three-year project, acquiring cross-functional skills ranging from fundraising and stakeholder management to engineering design reviews and team building.

The car is currently built to a rolling chassis stage — fully assembled without bodywork — and is being completed by his Nigerian teammates. Now, Ese is concentrating on the control of autonomous systems and is looking to explore the electric vehicle take off and landing (eVTOL) industry upon completion of his degree.

Upon receiving funding from the foundation, he shared:

“I would like to express my deep gratitude to have been awarded my scholarship offer from your esteemed foundation. This act of generosity already has its place in whatever I would become in the future.

Your belief in my potential is humbling and acts as a source of motivation and a reminder to myself of my great capabilities. With your assistance, I am able to pursue my masters degree with so much burden taken off my parents. I am committed to making the most of my time at Berkeley and hope to go on to provide benefits to greater mankind.”

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About the Murray Slater Foundation

Murray Slater graduated from UC Berkeley with a BS in civil engineering in 1944 and earned an MS in civil engineering in 1948. He maintained a deep affinity for Berkeley and its positive impact on his life.

After Berkeley, he went on to pursue a successful career as an engineer for Great Lakes Steel Corporation, North American Aviation (including Autonetics & Rockwell International, Incorporated); and Atomics International.

Mr. Slater’s work as an engineer spanned many disciplines, including transportation, nuclear, and chemical engineering. He also briefly taught in the engineering department at California State University, Northridge. Mr. Slater loved his work as an engineer that helped society and wished to pass this passion on through creating this foundation.

The foundation is committed to helping society in many ways, whether it be through funding engineering education, public engineering projects, or engineering-focused charities.

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Contributions to this article were made by funding recipient Ese Asoro, MEng '24 (ME); Sasha A. Keller, assistant director of corporate &

foundation relations for Berkeley Engineering; and Beth Leven, director of professional degree programs at the Fung Institute for Engineering Leadership.

Connect with Ese.

Edited by Veronica Roseborough.