Established in 1990, the IDEAs program is committed to enhancing diversity and inclusive excellence in the fields of engineering, as well as increasing the enrollment, retention and graduation rate of underrepresented students (African-American, Hispanic and American-Indian). The program resources are open to all engineering students.

Various activities are designed to enhance the culture of diversity, academic success and professional development. Two or three workshops are provided every semester. Workshops may include but are not limited to:

- Dynamic speakers to discuss engineering professions and share inspiring stories
- Field trips to local companies to meet engineers
- Workshops on how to use engineering software
- Workshops on personal development
- Panels on college life, engineering studies, co-op experience, undergraduate research or community services

The success of the IDEAs Program relies on the success of its students. Student support is offered in a variety of ways to enhance academic, professional and personal development of program participants.

The following incentives are available to the IDEAs Program participants:

- Scholarships
- Team intrusive advising
- Permanent study center
- Peer tutoring services
- Professional mentoring
- Freshmen transition activities
- Structured workshops and field trips
- Undergraduate Research Experience
- Outreach and community service

Besides the scholarships offered by the College of Engineering and each engineering department, IDEAs program participants are also eligible for Minority Engineering Scholarships.

The IDEAs Study Center is a place to meet other IDEAs students and to collect more academic resources. It features a quiet study area and group study rooms, furnished with desks, chairs, tables, lockers, information boards, whiteboards, blackboard, computers, a network printer and a microwave. The center is also used by National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and American Indian Science and Engineering Society Scientists (AISES) members for academic activities.
IDEAs Engineering Seminar

The Minority Engineering Seminar and Peer Group class (4100-120) is a one-credit elective course, offered every fall semester. The course provides an overview of disciplines and opportunities in engineering through weekly lectures, group discussions, learning-services and field trips. It also reinforces education/career choices and provides role models of successful minority engineers.

Course objectives:

• To motivate students toward achieving academic success in the field of engineering
• To provide a variety of speakers who share their academic knowledge and experience about both academics and non-academic resources in the field of engineering
• To facilitate interaction between students and faculty/staff members on campus, and among students, peers and alumni
• To ensure a small group structure that provides information and promotes supportive relationships

Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU)

Program participants are encouraged to do undergraduate research. Students may publish papers with research advisors or mentors in peer-reviewed journals or conference proceedings. Undergraduate research opportunities may include:

• Faculty support at the College of Engineering
• OSGC Junior or Senior Scholarship
• NASA Research Scholarship
• McNair Scholar Program
• National Science Foundation REU

To learn more, contact

Dr. Julie Zhao
Director, IDEAs Program
Schrank Hall North 360
Akron, OH 44325-3904
zhao1@uakron.edu
330-972-2823
engineering.uakron.edu/ideas