

Alumni Profile

Jie Zheng – Biomedical Engineering PhD Program



Career

Please provide a brief overview of your career path since graduating from UCI.

I graduated from UCI in March 2018. Since then, I am working as a Postdoc Fellow at Boston Children Hospital and Harvard Medical School.

What made you get into the career that you are in?

I was inspired by the research I have done during my Ph.D. study and encouraged by my previous PI, Professor Jack Lin to extend my career in Cognitive Neuroscience.

What do you see yourself doing in five or ten years?

I will be continuing my postdoc training in the next five years and looking for faculty positions in the academia.

How do you hope to make a difference?

I hope my work can bring translational meanings to help patients with neuropsychiatric disorders and memory deficits. In addition, I hope the understanding of human brain can push forward the development of artificial intelligence.

Your Time at UCI

When did you attend UCI?

I was studying in UCI from September 2013 to March 2018.

What program were you in?

I was enrolled in the Ph.D. program of Biomedical Engineering.

Why did you choose to come to UCI?

SoCal has very nice weather and a well-balanced living style. In addition, UCI has a group of vibrant and talented scientists.

Reflections

What made you decide to pursue a graduate degree?

The undergrad study is more general and comprehensive learning while graduate school can provide opportunities to sharpen specific skills. In addition, I am always interested in learning more about science and research.

What is your most memorable moment/experience at UCI?

Was there one thing or one person at UCI that really helped or made a difference in your graduate/postdoctoral career? If so, tell us about whomever or what it was?

Many people helped me during my study in UCI. 1) My first PI, professor Gultekin Gulsen picked me out from a lot of competitive applicants and gave me the chance to show my research motivation. 2) my second PI, professor Jack Lin provided me a lot of help during my switch of research direction from the optical imaging to the cognitive neuroscience. 3) Also, scientific communication activities in UCI are very helpful, especially to international students, like me. Specifically, Sandra Tsing Loh not only taught me how to trim my presentation skills but also showed me the fun of sharing science with public audience. 4) Last but not least, the administrative team of BME department is awesome. Julio, Sally, Clare and Cathy are very supportive when we first started the club for BME graduate student professional development. No doubt, they will be continuously doing amazing jobs in assisting students.

Alumni Life

What advice do you have for a new graduate student?

When you are at school, don't hesitate and use as much resource as you can. If you have specific goals but no available "tools", talk to your PI and department. They might be able to help you with what you planned. If you don't have a straight forward career path in your mind, don't box yourself in. Feel free to take courses from other departments. Sometimes these seemed unrelated "knowledge" might inspire you.

How do you balance work/life?

I might seem to be "cheating" on this question. My little puppy helped me to balance my work and life. The most important thing she taught me is to have a regular daily routine, even during the weekend. Also, exercise helps clear my mind and boosts my productivity a lot. SoCal is a perfect place for outdoor activities all year long. I usually take at least one day off to enjoy the beautiful nature every week.